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SAINTS



'The worst possible start for us' says Hodgson

Roy Hodgson believes there is a lot of work to do after his reign as Crystal Palace manager began with a 1-0 defeat to Saints at Selhurst Park.

Hodgson replaced Frank de Boer in midweek after the Eagles had started the Premier League season with four straight defeats and no goals.

But despite the change in the dugout, it was a familiar story on the pitch as Steven Davis' sixth-minute goal settled matters.

That means Palace have become the first ever top-flight team to lose each of their opening five league fixtures without scoring a goal.

Hodgson admitted: "It was the worst possible start, conceding the goal so early, a team that's obviously a little bit nervous and anxious anyway becomes even more nervous and anxious."

"I thought in the first half we were very nervous, people didn't show any real confidence on the ball at all."

"The desire was there but unfortunately it was a frantic desire, it was a desire where you're chasing and hoping, not a desire where you're in control and moving the ball around well and causing the opponents lots of problems."

Bad start

"The more we work together the better, I think, we will become. It's a disappointing to get a bad start."

"You talk up the benefits and bonuses of a good start but unfortunately talk doesn't get you that."

"The only thing that will get you a good start is a performance where you score more goals against the opposition and we certainly didn't do that today."

"We've already had four defeats, now it's five, but nothing I can say will change those five results, nothing I can say will score a goal in those five games or give us any points from those five games."

"It's a question what you do going forward."

"Confidence is an issue in every football team."

Continued on facing page



Roy Hodgson

CRYSTAL PALACE 0 SAINTS 1

Milestone man



Davis the hero

Steven Davis celebrates scoring what proved to be Saints' winner at Selhurst Park.

Adam Leitch

Saints picked up their first away win of the season as Virgil van Dijk made his much anticipated comeback.

Steven Davis scored the only goal as Saints defeated rock bottom Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park in Roy Hodgson's first match in charge of the Eagles.

While the match itself will not live too long in the memory, it was an important three points for Saints as it marked their second win of the campaign thus far and their first on the road.

It also heralded an important moment as van Dijk was reintroduced for the final few minutes having been ruled out since January, firstly by injury and then his desire to leave the club, which culminated in a transfer request.

Palace were in an upbeat mood at the start after a rousing reception for new manager Hodgson and got forward immediately, but Andros Townsend hooked a shot well off target.

Up the other end Davis got a

TEAM NEWS

Virgil van Dijk was back on the bench for Saints for the first time since his transfer stand-off.

The Dutch centre half handed in a summer transfer request but St Mary's officials refused to sell him.

Mauricio Pellegrino brought him back into the squad to face Crystal Palace after the 26-year-old, who has been out through injury since January, came through an under-23s game on Monday night.

Maya Yoshida, Mario Lemina, Dusan Tadic and Shane Long also got recalls with Jack Stephens, James Ward-Prowse, Sofiane Boufal and Manolo

Gabbiadini making way.

There was no place amongst the subs for Charlie Austin.

SAINTS: Forster, Cedric, Yoshida, Hoedt, Bertrand, Romeu, Lemina, Tadic, Davis, Redmond, Long. Subs: McCarthy, Stephens, van Dijk, Targett, Ward-Prowse, Boufal, Gabbiadini.

C PALACE: Hennessey, Ward, Dann, Fosu-Mensah, Schlupp, Loftus-Cheek, Cabaye, McArthur, Puchon, Townsend, Benteke.

Subs: Speroni, van Aanholt, Tomkins, Lee, Sakho, Kelly, Milivojevic.

fairly weak effort on target but it was a simple save for Wayne Hennessey.

However, there was no denying the Northern Ireland skipper on six minutes as he gave Saints the lead.

Davis, playing his 200th game for Saints, started the move by slipping the ball out to Dusan Tadic on the right. He skipped outside Jeffrey Schlupp and put in a low cross that Hennessey dived to palm out, but only as far as Davis whose first time side-

footed finish was directed into the bottom corner.

Palace were unravelling defensively and Shane Long had a presentable chance from a diagonal cross by Tadic from the right. He attempted to loop a header back over Hennessey but it drifted over.

Christian Benteke should have levelled on 16 minutes as he was presented with the chance to shoot first time on the turn inside the six yard box after Nathan Redmond had slipped and Ruben Loftus-Cheek's cross had taken a

slight deflection.

The big striker's effort wasn't particularly well struck and at a perfect height and direction for Fraser Forster, who stood big to block from close range.

Redmond struck an effort from 25 yards but it was straight at Hennessey as Saints continued to pressurise a creaky Palace.

Loftus-Cheek served Saints a reminder their lead was not yet a secure one as he drove forward and unleashed a powerful low drive that zipped just wide.

Moments later he battled his way into the area and was only denied by a last ditch challenge from Ryan Bertrand.

Yohan Cabaye became the first player to pick up a yellow card for a late challenge on Mario Lemina.

Saints threatened to finish the first half with another goal to give themselves a cushion to show for their dominance.

However, Tadic's shot in the area was bravely blocked, while Hennessey was able to get down to his right to save from Redmond's low effort from just outside the box.

Townsend had the final shot of the half but slashed a half volley well wide of the target.

SAINTS



Pellegrino: That was an important success

Mauricio Pellegrino hailed an "important" win for his side as they beat Premier League basement dwellers Crystal Palace.

Defeat at home to Watford last weekend left Saints really needing a victory to boost morale up against Palace in Roy Hodgson's first game in charge of the Eagles.

Steven Davis scored what proved to be the winner early in the game, much to the delight of the Saints boss.

"It was an important game for us. To win on this pitch is not easy," admitted Pellegrino.

"Obviously everybody is happy, we are really happy, about the result, but also how we achieved the game from the beginning.

"The team was really focussed and in second ball.

"It is not just (Christian) Benteke but the people that is around him and in front of him, because Palace have a group of players with quality.

"We controlled the ball and it is



Mauricio Pellegrino

something we need to improve.

"We have a group of players with the quality and the capacity to keep the ball and I think we did well.

"This is important news for us, the performance of the team."

Saints have now kept successive clean sheets in their two away league games, following a 0-0 stalemate at Huddersfield last month.

Davis' goal was only Saints' second in open play in five league games, and only their sixth in their last 19 and a half hours of Premier League action.

Hodgson: A bad start

From facing page

But the confidence only comes when you start playing well, seeing the work that you're trying to do pay off, in particular in terms of results.

"The guys this year have not had this chance, this is a further blow."

Davis struck on his 200th appearance for Saints, who bounced back from a home defeat to Watford.

The Northern Ireland midfielder said: "It was an important game for us. After last week's performance we were a little bit disappointed so it was important we came here and showed that sort of determination and edge to our game."



Fraser Forster pulls off a great save from ex-Saint Jason Puncheon. Inset - Virgil van Dijk waves to the Saints fans after the final whistle.

At the break Saints had the lead and were comfortably the better team, but knew they would ideally get themselves another goal to start to feel more secure.

Saints rode their luck at the beginning of the second half as Palace created two great chances in the space of a minute.

Firstly, nobody in a Palace shirt was able to get a decisive touch on Loftus-Cheek's drilled low ball across the six yard box.

Then, just moments later, Schlupp found Jason Puncheon with a low ball from the left but the former Saints man put his shot from close range straight at the diving Forster when virtually anywhere else would have been a goal.

Scott Dann went in the book after hauling down Davis as Saints tried to wrestle back control of the game as the conditions at Selhurst Park changed from sunshine to driving rain.

James McArthur quickly followed after a couple of fouls in quick succession.

The game was starting to drift a little and Hodgson tried to do something about it with Luka Milivojevic replacing McArthur on 69 minutes.

Long was shown a yellow card



Virgil van Dijk waits to come on for his long-awaited Saints return.

for dissent as Saints got increasingly frustrated with referee Robert Madley.

However, the most important thing for them was to keep their lead intact.

Joel Ward got a head on a deep free kick but it was simple for Forster.

There were boos of disapproval ringing around Selhurst Park as Palace took off Loftus-Cheek, who had been their brightest attacking threat in the game, replacing him with Bakary Sako.

Opportunities had been few and

far between for Saints in the second period but they had a great chance to kill off the game on 79 minutes.

Davis whipped in an inswinging corner that found Oriol Romeu totally unmarked eight yards out, but he headed over the bar.

Saints made their first change to try and shore things up for the final five minutes with James Ward-Prowse coming on for Redmond.

They knew what was going to be coming as Palace prepared to

lump even more long balls up to Christian Benteke.

Saints had dealt with it well all afternoon, with Lemina also providing an excellent shield in front of the back four.

To be fair, Palace hadn't looked much like scoring for the majority of the game but Pellegrino knew that without the cushion of a second goal his team would have to dig in.

To help them cope with the potential aerial bombardment he brought on van Dijk for his first appearance since January 22 and also since handing in a transfer request.

He replaced Tadic as Saints went with five at the back for the closing stages.

The Saints fans responded by singing his name and applauding him on to the pitch.

Cedric Soares almost wrapped things up as he cut inside from the right and hit a left-footed shot that Hennessey saved with his legs at the near post.

Manolo Gabbiadini replaced Long as Saints looked to run down the five minutes of added time, which they duly did without too many dramas.

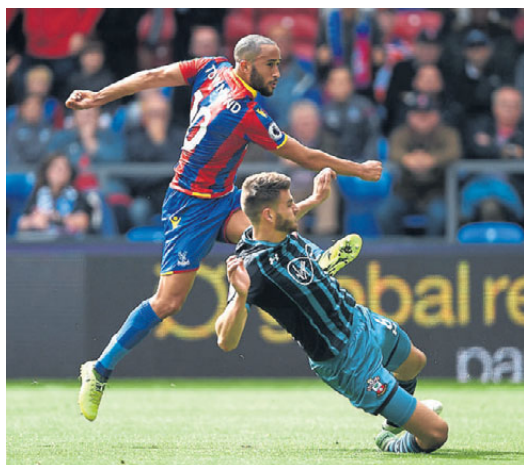
CRYSTAL PALACE 0 SAINTS 1, SELHURST PARK



James Ward-Prowse and Jeffrey Schlupp



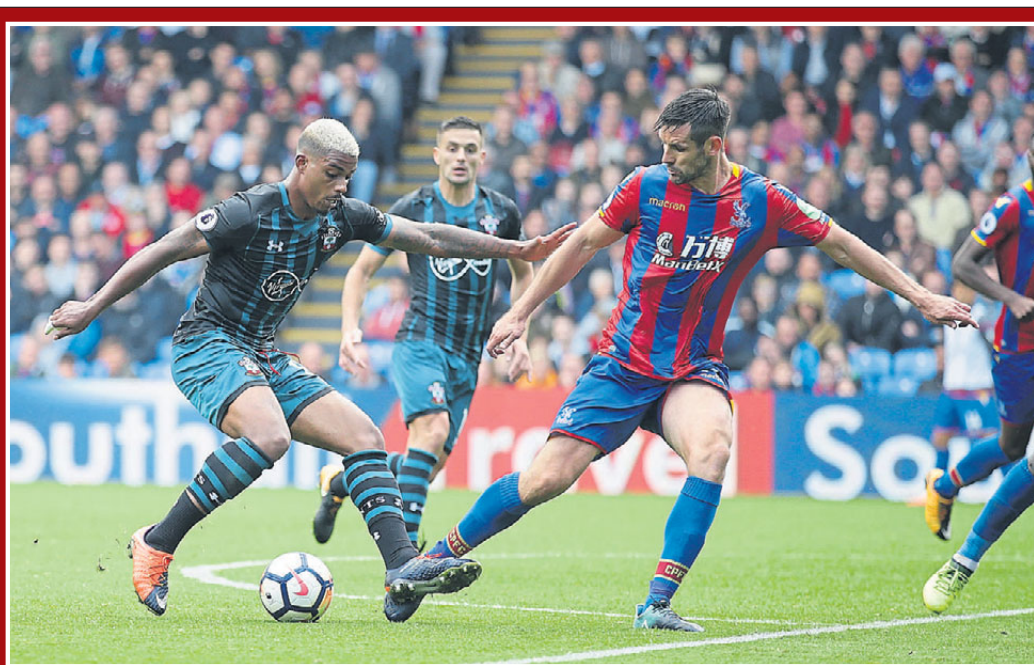
Nathan Redmond (centre) and Crystal Palace's Scott Dann



Andros Townsend shoots under pressure from Wesley Hoedt



Roy Hodgson poses for a selfie prior to his first game.



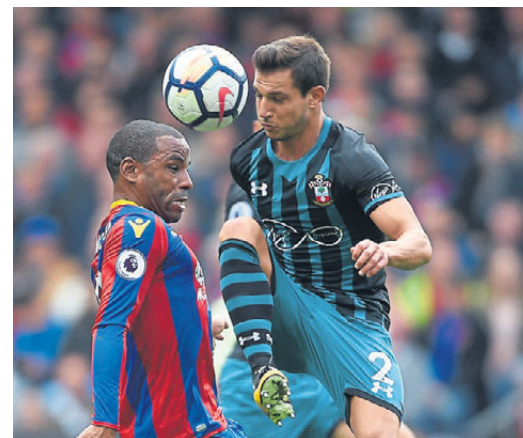
Mario Lemina and Scott Dann of Crystal Palace



Virgil van Dijk watches on from the subs bench.



Oriol Romeu (left) and Crystal Palace's Yohan Cabaye



Timothy Fosu-Mensah (left) and Cedric Soares

CRYSTAL PALACE 0 SAINTS 1, SELHURST PARK



Crystal Palace manager Roy Hodgson steps out for his first game in charge to be greeted with lots of photographers.



Virgil van Dijk signs his name for a young fan ahead of his eagerly-anticipated first team comeback at Selhurst Park.



Crystal Palace's Christian Benteke (left) and Maya Yoshida



Cedric Soares (right) and Crystal Palace's ex-Saints winger Jason Puncheon battle for possession at Selhurst Park.



Mario Lemina (left) and Ruben Loftus-Cheek battle for the ball



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A closer look at Hodgson's Palace debut

Roy Hodgson began life in the Crystal Palace hotseat with a bump as Saints inflicted a fifth straight Premier League defeat.

Here, Simon Peach takes a closer look at the 70-year-old's first match in the Selhurst Park dugout.

WELCOME

Saturday was Hodgson's return to the dugout for the first time since overseeing England's ignominious Euro 2016 exit to Iceland. That performance may have put some off the appointment but, back to his Croydon roots, the 70-year-old was given a particularly warm welcome by the Selhurst Park faithful. There were no audible signs of frustration at the break despite Palace going in 1-0 behind. Hodgson stood in the technical area as the rain poured in the second half, when the Eagles fan base were not quite so forgiving. Irrked by their star



Roy Hodgson feels the pain

man Ruben Loftus-Cheek's withdrawal, there were a smattering of boos at full-time.

DEFENCE

Hodgson needs to bring organisation and resilience to the backline, just as Sam Allardyce - another former Three Lions boss looking to make amends in south London - managed to do. The Eagles boss stuck with fans' favourite Joel Ward at right-back and Jeffrey Schlupp on the opposite flank, with on-loan Manchester United centre-back Timothy Fosu-Mensah partnering Scott Dann. The backline was caught out embarrassingly frequently by diagonal balls to their left-back area in the first half. Dusan Tadic all too easily skipped past Schlupp in that area of the field and the resulting cross was parried by Wayne Hennessey into the path of Steven Davis to score what proved to be a sixth-minute winner.

Continued on facing page

PREMIER LEAGUE

New boys Hoedt

Echo Reporter

SAINTS fans have been taking to social media to celebrate the 1-0 win at Crystal Palace.

Here are a selection of views from the Daily Echo's website ...

Great result for Saints, not so the Boo Boys.

Les has found two gems in Lemina and Hoedt.

Davis, Tadic and Forster were all superb.

Trojan Otter

Agree but Redmond was out of it today, but better without Boufal.

However the big problem is still we did not create much again. Long worked hard but not given any chances to score.

Our attacking midfielders are our weakness.

"in that number"

A very welcome win, but plenty of work to do. Same old issue... goals!

Shane Long played very well. Lemina looks very impressive.

DisplacedFan

Welcome back VvD forgiven, but not forgotten.

Mush On The Beach

I'll want to see his commitment on the pitch week in week out before I feel like that.

Under the West Stand

Much better!

Nicely retrieved the lost Watford points. Lemina looking a little too good, what with the Jan window coming up though.

Welcome back, Virgil.

Good keeper that Forster.

Positively4thStreet

Yes we could have scored more but that was a very very very important WIN!!!!!!

Good to see VvD get back on the pitch, hopefully he will put the summer behind him.

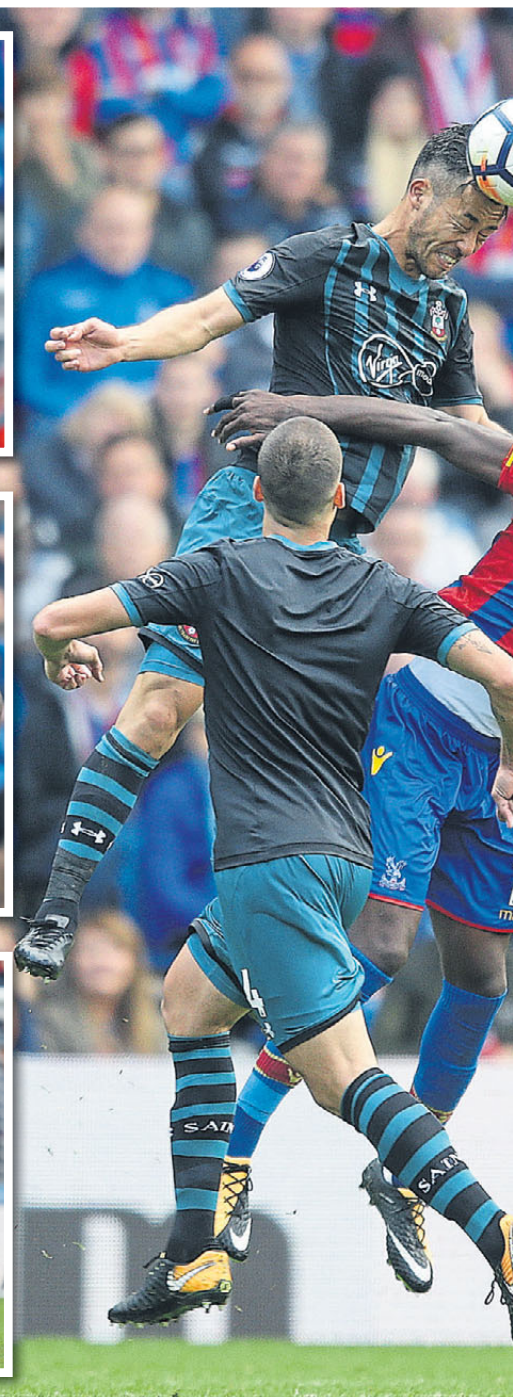
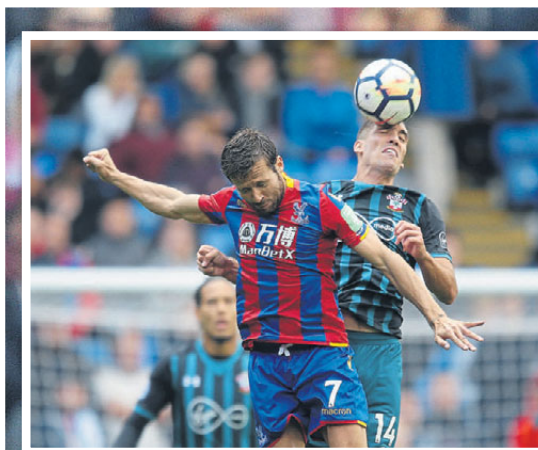
Interesting decision for MoPe next week, 4 very good CB's to pick from. he played 5 at the back when VvD came on, is that a hint of things to come?

saintsin73

Great game from Lemina, also from Long, AND FF kept us in it..twice. Much better from the whole team today and good voice from our travelling fans as well.

zurichboy

That will do nicely. An easy away win against a very poor Palace. We looked well organised



and confident in possession at the back and in midfield (Lemina outstanding) but there is still a lot of work to be done in the final third where we looked short of ideas. A good confidence booster for Saints. Congrats to the players and manager.

forlorn

It was a good character building

test for the team and happily they passed.

I'm happy for Pellegrino, he will gain confidence from this.

Im happy for us fans, we should gain confidence from this.

Lemina and Hoedt look quality additions.

Mush On The Beach

Fantastic MOM performance by

Lemina, Hoedt looks the real deal and Romeu was rock solid again. Fair play to Forster too, he made a couple of very good saves.

Same old problem, though, not a single chance for Long, other than the looped cross that he headed wide. Redmond just doesn't do enough for me - I'd prefer to see Long out wide with Gabbiadini up top.

PREMIER LEAGUE



and Lemina star



A selection of images from Saints' 1-0 win at Crystal Palace.

Nonetheless it was a good win and a much improved performance, one where we were much sharper and looked hungry.

Bertrand's body language looks much improved too.

AndyT in Salt Lake City, USA

So many positive performances today, the back 4 had palace in their pockets, on the odd occasion

they did sneak out Big Fraser was there to keep them out, 2 top draw saves today!

Hoedt was magnificent and a close 2nd for MOTM for me, great defensively but what a range of passing he has. MOTM was Lemina, found time and space everywhere on the pitch, can tackle, pass, has great vision and is a leader on the pitch. his stats say

it all, passes 73, successful passes 66, passing accuracy 90.4% touches 97. most passes successful passes and touches! what a find by Les and the recruitment team.

saintsin73

A good win, I thought Lemina, Davis, Romeu and Hoedt were excellent, but what are we going to do about Redmond. Too many

misplaced passes, lightweight in the tackle and seems to think passing back all the time Is ok. He has the skill to take players on, why doesn't he do it?

Two crucial saves by Forster kept us in front.

Lemina looked a class player alongside Romeu, another product of a great scouting system.

A confidence building win, now repeat it at home and play TWO forwards.

Everton Saint

Funny old game football. We're struggling for goals but start without either of the only two real goal scorers in the squad yet win the game so well done MP2. Lemina and Hoedt showed that Les and his black box are still working really well.

Seedhouse the Unrepentant

Here are some views from the Daily Echo's Saints Facebook page ..

Lemina getting all the Sky praise but Rom was brilliant next to him too... just sat back too much second half. I'd also say Long has to start next game based on today.

James Moody

A shot stopping keeper, a strong defence and a strong midfield, with a striker who chased everything. Totally different to last week. Will be a shame to see Jack Stephens on the bench but we have a really strong back line again now. Lemina and Romeu brilliant and Long fantastic.

Great team win.

Martin Covill

Will celebrate the win. But not enough chances. Palace would have won but for a top Forster performance. Hoedt read the game really well and Lemina owned the midfield.

Christopher Clee

Romeu & Lemina class still need someone to start scoring good win guys COYR

Kevin Roe

Actually looking premier league today.

Mark Osman

Is it a coincidence that every game Ward Prowse hasn't started we've won!

Matthew Knight

Needed that. Lemina is real class. Hoedt too. Very very important win.

Philip Bidgood

Long is a machine, his batteries never run out. Great performance from the team, thought Hoedt had a good game too.

Luke Sawyer

Spotlight on new Palace boss Roy ...

from facing page

There were a few other hairy moments defensively in the opening period, but they stood firm after the break.

ATTACK

The Frank de Boer experiment was over in a blink of an eye, with the appointment of Hodgson a nod to a more pragmatic style of play. Loftus-Cheek was the only change to last weekend's harsh 1-0 loss at Burnley and made an impact, with his defensive nous complemented by an attacking instinct. Bakary Sako replaced him as the hosts chased the game, although the crosses continued to be poor on the whole. Fraser Forster had to be at his best to deny Christian Benteke and Jason Puncheon, although there was not much else for the



Roy Hodgson

giant Saints goalkeeper to do.

OVERALL IMPACT

Hodgson looks to have his work cut out given Palace's display on Saturday lunchtime. Hennessey's goalkeeping continues to be questionable, the defence looked rickety at times and finding the right blend is key. Wilfried Zaha's return cannot come quickly enough for a toothless attack, neither can a first goal having set an unwanted Premier League record of the longest start to a season without scoring.

COMING UP ...

It doesn't get any easier for Hodgson. Indeed, it gets a lot worse - successive league trips to Manchester (City next weekend, followed by United a week later) pose obvious problems, and Hodgson's second home league is against defending champions Chelsea. Ouch!

Roy looking to future

Roy Hodgson insists he has got over the disappointment of the way his reign as England manager ended - and that the defeat by Iceland never once led to him questioning his abilities.

The 70-year-old this weekend oversaw his first fixture as Crystal Palace manager, when they hosted Saints in the Premier League.

It came 14 months after Hodgson resigned from the England job following their elimination from Euro 2016.

He recognises the division has "evolved" in the five years since he was last a Premier League manager, but Hodgson remains "absolutely" convinced he will lead Palace to safety.

"Matches do get lost when you're a football coach, particularly in tournament football," Hodgson said of the Iceland defeat, which came to define his four years with England.

"I enjoyed my time with England: a huge honour. I have very good memories of those times, the people and players I worked with. But it's over. That time has gone. That chapter is finished. I'm focused on the next one: Crystal Palace, Crystal Palace, Crystal Palace."

"Careers are defined by small



Roy Hodgson

moments. Nothing I can say or do will change that. It was a four-year period; one I look back on with satisfaction on a lot of things. But I can't look back with satisfaction with not progressing at tournaments in the way we'd have liked.

"It's a chapter that's finished, in the past as far as I'm concerned, and now it's a chapter in the book of life opening for me, and one I'm looking forward to. One I'm hoping brings joy to the fans of Crystal Palace."

"I believe the team will stay up. Absolutely. I wouldn't have taken the job if I didn't believe that."

Hodgson has previously succeeded in inspiring both Fulham and West Brom to safety.

He also joined each at far later stages of the season.

"(With) Fulham I had 18 games, West Brom 12 games," Hodgson said. "This is a 34-game season. Our focus is really on May, not the end of September. Leagues aren't won or teams relegated in September."

"Everything evolves. We are the league where the top players want to play, a league where the top managers want to work. There has been an evolution in the right way."

NON LEAGUE

Dolphins avoid FA Cup upset at Salisbury



Jamie Whisken.

Salisbury 0 Poole Town 2

Poole Town ended a run of seven winless games by knocking Salisbury out of the FA Cup with two second-half goals.

A 62nd header by former AFC Totton defender Jamie Whisken and a stoppage time clincher by Pompey loanee Jez Bedford gave the Dolphins victory.

Although Poole play two runs higher on the non-pyramid, this was a welcome result for manager Tommy Killick, whose side had lost six of those seven National League South games.

The first-half was largely a stop-start affair, with Salisbury bossing without too many real threats.

The tie sparked into life in the second-half, with Poole gaining in confidence and missing a guilt edged opportunity ten minutes into the period when Jacki Dickson was through on his own but took too long and enabled goalkeeper Charlie Searle to save.

Seven minutes later, however, Poole got their noses in front, when Searle failed to command the six-yard box and WHISKEN

headed in.

Poole's tactics of slowing the game down sparked a flurry of yellow cards and antagonised the home faithful.

Salisbury wasted a great chance to equalise when ex-Dolphin Marvin Brooks thumped a low shot against the base of the post.

Soon after, sub Chris Shephard appeared to have been fouled in the box, but referee Lee Bennan waived away the protests.

Seven minutes into stoppage time, BEDFORD dashed Salisbury's hopes with a second goal

'Mr Goals' is quickly back in the old routine

Wendy Gee



HE was known at Bashley as 'Mr Goals' and that nickname still stands.

Serial scorer Richard Gillespie took no time whatsoever to open his Christchurch account.

Dual-signed by Priory to help build up his fitness after injury, the Poole Town marksman bounced off the bench midway through the second half against Totton & Eling at Hurn Bridge last weekend and quickly helped himself to two goals.

Christchurch were already well in command of the Sydenhams One showdown before Gillespie made his entrance with Max Wilcock (2), Luke Stone, Grant Cormack and Jon Blake also scoring in a 7-1 romp for the league leaders.

Manager Ollie Cherrett smiled: "We were head and shoulders the better side and to score seven goals was good as well."

Cherrett, who wished to thank Dolphins boss Tom Killick and Poole Town for agreeing to the short-term dual-registration deal for ex-Eastleigh marksman Gillespie, said: "For us to be able to bring someone like Richard in is a massive coup for me and for the club."

"It came about that Gilly was looking to get some minutes and it works for us over the next three weeks."

"He is coming for the right reasons. His goal is to get fit, score goals and get himself ready to quite rightly go and play at a higher level."

"The situation works for all parties. With his experience and goal-scoring ability, we would be naïve



Richard Gillespie, left, in action for Poole.

not to take the opportunity up.

"I am not stupid enough to think that we will have him for a longer period of time, it is going to be a few weeks to help him get match fit."

Another of Priory's subs, central defender Chris Senior, has returned to boost the squad after

battling a range of injury problems since the start of the season.

"Chris is our club captain and is a massive part of what we are trying to achieve," said Cherrett. "He knows the league, he's been with us now for nearly 18 months and is an experienced player."

"He will bring that experience

to the pitch and we have missed him."

"To welcome back players like that is going to strengthen us, that's the most important thing."

Christchurch dipped out of the Sydenhams League Cup 1-0 at Premier outfit Alresford Town on Wednesday.

NON LEAGUE



Great week for ex-Eastleigh striker Scott



Scott Wilson

IT'S been a heck of a week for Macclesfield Town's former Eastleigh striker Scott Wilson.

Having plundered the winner in the Silkmen's 1-0 National League victory at Solihull last Saturday, he was at it again on Tuesday evening at home to AFC Fylde.

Having seen his 14th-minute opener wiped out by Jack Muldoon, Wilson nipped in for a stoppage-time decider.

Using his pace to latch onto a through pass, he rounded the 'keeper before sliding the ball

into the gaping goal.

Wilson wasn't the only ex-Spitfire in goal-hungry midweek form.

Brett Williams plundered a hat-trick for Bromley in their 3-1 home success over one of his former clubs, Torquay United, also in the National League.

● EX-SAINT Dan Harding's spell as caretaker boss of Whitehawk is over.

The Sussex club have turned to their former manager Steve King to haul them off the foot of the National League South.

A Whitehawk statement said: "The length of contract (three years) demonstrates the commitment that both the club and Steve have for future growth and stability."

Harding, a player/coach with the Hawks, stepped up to manage on a temporary basis following the departure of Jimmy Dack.

He was the third ex-Eastleigh man to have taken charge of Whitehawk in recent seasons, following in the footsteps of Richard Hill and Paul Reid who are both back with the Spitfires.

Curtis comes alive as Stags run riot

Wendy Gee



SAINTS and Eastleigh fans may be going through a bit of a lean time when it comes to goals, but the same can't be said for followers of AFC Totton.

For the second time this season they were treated to a five-goal feast at the Total Branding Community Stadium last Saturday with 18-year-old wing wizard Curtis Young conjuring up a contender for goal-of-the-season.

It was Young who netted Totton's third against Yate Town, bending in a precision shot from distance.

That went some way to ensuring the 222 crowd got their money's worth, but what followed was one of those 'worth the entrance fee on its own' moments.

Weaved

With 84 minutes on the clock, Young weaved his way through the Yate defence, throwing in a nutmeg along the way, and still had the presence of mind to drill a precision shot into the net.

Young, who initially joined the club on loan from AFC Bournemouth last season, is now a fully-fledged Totton player having been released by the Cherries over the summer.

Stags boss Louis Langdown would dearly love to help him back up the footballing tree and, while he admits that Young isn't always on his game for the whole 90 minutes, he believes the good massively outweighs the bad.

"Sometimes Curtis is out of



Curtis Young on the ball for AFC Totton.

the game quite a bit, then all of a sudden he comes alive. As a wide player you can sort of accept that, but you need some quality at the end of it and Curtis delivers that end product," said the boss.

"He's got countless assists already this year and he's on five goals from eight games. He's got an opportunity that kid, there is no doubt about it.

"He's an out-and-out goal threat

and he works so hard for us. I'm really pleased for him.

"Curtis has been exceptional for us. I've got a lot of time for him, so have our supporters and the players."

Ibe set to realise his 'immense potential'

Eddie Howe has tipped Jordan Ibe to end his sticky Bournemouth start and realise his "immense promise" this season.

Super-sub Ibe's two assists turned Friday night's Brighton clash on its head as the Cherries edged home 2-1 for their first Premier League win of the season.

The 21-year-old teed up Andrew Surman then Jermain Defoe as Bournemouth ended their four-match losing streak.

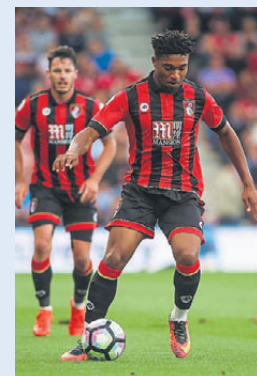
Ibe has struggled under the weight of his club-record £15million signing from Liverpool in 2016 - but now Howe hopes the England Under-21 cap can finally hit his straps.

"It's a really, really good cameo of what he's all about," said Howe of Ibe's match-turning show.

"He's an extremely talented lad, and he's different from anyone else we have.

"He showed some real final-third quality. That back heel was a moment of magic, and the second weighted pass for Jermain was so good.

"He's a player of immense promise, and we've often



Jordan Ibe.

underestimated how young he is.

"It feels as though he's been around a long time. But he's still learning in lots of aspects and he's still improving."

Bournemouth avoided the ignominy of five-straight Premier League losses for the first time on Friday, rallying for a vital win at Dean Court.

Solly March capped a flowing move to put Brighton deservedly ahead, but Surman finished coolly to level, before Defoe rifled home the winner.

Defoe naturally grabbed immediate headlines, claiming his first Bournemouth goal in 16 years, but Howe also reserved special praise for Ibe.

And the Cherries boss believes another productive pre-season could now be the making of one of his most prized assets.

"Jordan's showing the attitude to improve, to come back a better player this season from last," said Howe.

"He's got used to our training and how we work, he's understanding more that demand we put on our players.

"Sometimes that can be a shock initially but Jordan's beginning to get it."

● Howe praise for Defoe - see page 24.

NON LEAGUE



In debt to 'mate' Nash

ALRESFORD Town are safely through to the second round of the Sydenhams League Cup.

But manager Richard Luffman admitted his top-flight troops were not at their best in Wednesday's 1-0 home win over Sydenhams One underdogs Christchurch.

A second-half Jamie Nash goal proved the difference, booking the Magpies a trip to Bashley.

Luffman tweeted: "That was a tough night's work. Far from our best. Possible worst 'football' we've played. But a win's a win. Thanks to my mate @jamiennash9."

Also on Wednesday, New Milton Town (Adam Louka) were held 1-1 at home by Laverstock & Ford (Graham Mankin) in the SWL Cup. Lavvy progressed 5-4 on penalties



Richard Luffman

and will travel to Verwood in round two.

● WITH wind and rain raging, Bashley 'stormed' to a 6-0 win over Bournemouth Manor in the Bournemouth Senior Cup.

Harrison White's deflected 35-yard drive swept them into the lead before Kabba Jack doubled their advantage.

Manor's cause was not helped by losing the services of experienced ex-Bash and current New Milton manager Shane Sheridan, who was forced off by injury.

SubTyrrell Sampson scored number three and Lewis Aimson made it 4-0 with a wind-assisted punt from the halfway line.

Conor Whiteley judged the gale-force perfectly to net direct from a corner and the Foresters' sixth was another classic with Rae'mur Henry meeting Dan Thompson's cross on the run.

EASTLEIGH 2 AFC FYLDE 2

Draw specialists are held yet again

Simon Walter



EASTLEIGH made it five draws in six matches as AFC Fylde hit an equaliser in each half in front of the Silverlake Stadium's biggest crowd of the season.

Reda Johnson headed the Spitfires into a 27th-minute lead, only to see it cancelled out in first-half injury time when Henry Jones reacted quickest to Graham Stack's save from the dangerous Danny Rowe.

Gary McSheffrey's first Eastleigh goal from a sumptuous Mark Yeates pass restored the Spitfires lead in the 55th minute.

But Fylde defender Jordan Tunnicliffe hit a second equaliser for last year's Conference North champions on the hour when Eastleigh failed to clear a free kick.

Eastleigh made two changes to the team that lost at home to Maidstone on Tuesday with Chris Zebroski and Johnson in for James Constable and Ayo Obileye.

Fylde's on-loan Bristol City winger Jonny Smith provided the best moments of the first half with his runs down the left flank and he soon made his presence felt, evading a challenge before firing narrowly over Stack's crossbar.

Rowe had an early shot blocked and Jones fired wide for Fylde.

Then Michael Green's cross was deflected goalwards and Fylde keeper Jay Lynch saved brilliantly with an outstretched leg from close range.

When Fylde failed to clear the resulting corner, Johnson headed in the opening goal from inside the six-yard box.

Johnson missed out following another good Mark Yeates flag-kick, but Fylde restored parity in first-half injury time.

Shortly after dragging a shot wide of Stack's far post, Rowe's powerful 25-yarder was parried by Stack and Jones was first to the rebound.

Yeates provided a moment of genuine quality to set up the Spitfires' second goal in the 54th minute.

The former Watford winger's diagonal ball into McSheffrey's feet outwitted the Fylde centre-halves and had just enough back spin on



Reda Johnson scores Eastleigh's first goal. Pictures by Stuart Martin.

it to sit up perfectly for the former Birmingham man to slot in.

Smith failed to make the most of an opportunity on the counter attack, but Fylde were soon level once again.

Eastleigh failed to deal with a free-kick from the right and Tunnicliffe made the most of their indecisiveness, clipping a second equaliser into the top corner from inside a congested penalty area.

Stack saved from Smith before Fylde captain Andrew Bond sliced the rebound horribly wide.

Johnson also missed the target with a header from a wonderful Sam Matthews cross before Rowe, out of nothing, thumped a 30-yarder against Stack's right-hand post.

With ten minutes left, Eastleigh also hit the woodwork, Johnson

flicking on a header against the crossbar from a free-kick.

But Eastleigh were relieved not to concede a third as Rowe twice went close.

After missing the target with one effort, Fylde's number nine was denied by Stack in an 85th-minute one-on-one.

TEAMS

Eastleigh: Stack, Howe (c) Boyce (Wood 64), Johnson, Green, Hollands, Matthews (McAllister 75), Miley, Yeates, McSheffrey (Williamson 82), Zebroski.

Unused subs: Constable, Obileye
AFC Fylde: Lynch, Montrose, Francis-Angol, Tunnicliffe, Bond, Rowe, Muldoon (McCread 82), Grand, Smith (Blinkhorn 89), Burke, Jones (Tasdemir 70).

Unused subs: Taylor, Richards,

Referee: Sam Purkiss
Attendance: 3,312



Reda Johnson wheels away after scoring the opener for Eastleigh.

NON LEAGUE

Ollie: 'It's left a sour taste in the mouth'

CHRISTCHURCH manager Ollie Cherrett criticised the timing of Weymouth's withdrawal from Sydenhams Wessex One and said it had left "a sour taste in the mouth."

The Terras this week announced they had disbanded their reserve team. Their record – which had included defeats by Christchurch, Ringwood, Tadley, Downton, AFC Stoneham and Follands – will now be expunged.

Weymouth spent one full season in Wessex One after clubs had voted in favour of relaxing a directive which allowed reserve sides to enter the competition, *writes Neil Perrett*.

Cherrett told The Pink's sister paper The (Bournemouth) Daily Echo: "It is disappointing and the timing has certainly left a sour taste in the mouth."

"Their excellent facilities enhanced the league and Ray Pearce and Hilary Billimore had run the

team very professionally, so it is a great shame to lose them.

"But they had a new manager in the summer and if he felt the reserves wasn't what he was looking to do, perhaps then would have been a better time to pull out rather than eight games into the season."

"It is frustrating from an opposition team's point of view and we are one of eight clubs to have played them in a game that has now been rendered meaningless."

"I was very much in favour of them coming into the league."

"I thought it would strengthen it on and off the pitch, but maybe this shows the pitfalls with reserve teams."

"Perhaps the league were correct in saying reserve teams should not be allowed in."

"Let's just hope Weymouth haven't ruined it for a club which wants to come in for the right reasons."

Weymouth chairman Steve Mills believes the future of the club "looks amazing" despite the sudden demise of the reserves.

He said the club had been "redirected" after the success of a recent youth tournament, adding that the Terras only have "so many resources".

"We did not expect it (the youth section) to grow quite as fast as it has within a couple of weeks. We had to concentrate on what the club want," he explained.

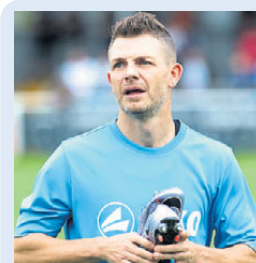
"The future of Weymouth Football Club looks amazing."

Commenting on the decision to withdraw the reserves, he added: "It was not taken lightly. We've got some players who have been with us for quite a while."

"The players have taken it very well. Some have gone away just to think about what they want to do next."



Ollie Cherrett



Cureton still knocking in the goals

JAMIE Cureton, above, is still giving defenders the runaround at the age of 42.

Gosport Borough were his latest victims as Farnborough came away from Privett Park 4-2 victors in the Evo-Stik South Premier on Tuesday.

Four goals in the opening 24 minutes ensured Gosport were well on the slippery road to defeat before Aaron Dawson and captain Luke King halved the arrears.

Cureton struck twice for Farnborough, adding yet another achievement to the list for the widely-travelled former Bristol Rovers, Reading and Eastleigh marksman.

Cureton tweeted on Wednesday: "Good 4-2 win last night got my first 2 goals of the season which means I've now played and scored in the top 8 divisions @ FarnboroughFC."

The Bristol-born striker added: "I still really love playing so I'll carry on until my legs give up on me as I'll be a long time retired."



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NON LEAGUE



Owen's Royl command performance

HOLDERS Sholing opened their defence of the Sydenhams Wessex League Cup with a 4-1 win at Totton & Eling on Tuesday.

It was a tie that spanned a broad age spectrum with Totton & Eling's 45-year-old Jo Tessem having been playing Premier League football for Saints when Sholing's teenage goal-scorer Owen Royl was born!

Zac Moulard opened the scoring on 25 minutes and the Boatmen really came to life midway through the second half with young Royl's 25-yarder quickly followed by Alex Sawyer burying Moulard's pin-point cross.

Sawyer struck again on 73 minutes, but it was Division One underdogs Totton & Eling who scored the goal-of-the-game through sub Liam Mears.

He picked the ball up in midfield and went on a twisting, mazy run before firing a shot across 'keeper Ryan Gosney and into the net.

Dave Diaper's Boatmen now



Owen Royl. Pic by Ray Routledge

visit Ringwood Town who beat Downton 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

Premier leaders Blackfield & Langley crushed Waterside neighbours Hythe & Dibden 6-0 and will now host another Division One side, Romsey Town.

Kane Daysh (2), Callum Cunliffe-Pilley, Joe Butcher, Liam Triggs and James Guthrie scored on a wild, windswept night at Gang Warily.

The tables were turned at Cams Alders where Division One outfit AFC Stoneham upset top-flight hosts Fareham Town 2-1 - Sergio Caballero's brace firing the Purples gloriously through to round three.

Ian Saunders' AFC Portchester will host Cowes Sports in round two after eclipsing Premier Division rivals Bournemouth Poppies 3-2 at Victoria Park through Steve Ramsey (2) and Rob Evans.

Andover Town exited their fourth cup competition in less than two weeks, losing a penalty shootout 7-6 at Petersfield.

Andover had led 2-0 through McAulie Stubbs and Eduardo Jimenez before being pegged back to 2-2.

Smells like teen spirit in the Wessex League!



Leon Carbayo-Borges

TEENAGERS have been making a big name for themselves for Wessex League clubs this week.

Having had 16-year-old Leon Carbayo-Borges to thank for their late FA Vase winner at Shaftesbury, Brockenhurst found themselves on the receiving end of some teen power at Horndean on Tuesday night.

Hero of the hour for the Deans was 17-year-old Tommy Leigh who scored twice and struck the crossbar from distance in Brock's 3-1 Sydenhams Wessex League Cup defeat.

Dual-signed Eastleigh youngster Ollie Dennett gave a much-changed Brock side the lead, but the Deans bounced back through Leigh's dashing double and Josh Maloney.

Leigh's second was a joy to behold after Maloney and Mark Smith had combined to lay the ball back to him on the edge of the box.

"Not even a professional 'keeper would have saved that," purred impressed Deans boss Michael Birmingham.

"Tommy's performance shows

what strength in depth we have at the club."

Brockenhurst boss Pat McManus missed the Horndean trip.

He was away on a scouting mission at Godalming Town who host the Badgers in the Vase next weekend.

Godalming lost 3-1 to Colliers Wood United - their loan goal coming from the familiar face of ex-Weymouth, Eastleigh and Farnborough winger Darren Wheeler.

Brock boss Pat has high hopes for Leon

Wendy Gee



LEON Carbayo-Borges won't forget last weekend in a hurry.

Still walking on air from netting an extra-time winner for Brockenhurst in the FA Vase last Saturday, the sharp-shooting 16-year-old was at it again on Sunday, scoring a hat-trick for the under-18s in the Hampshire Youth League against Moneyfields.

With the Badgers' 3-2 up and time running out in the Vase at Shaftesbury, Brock boss Pat McManus threw the young man on for Will Tickle in an attempt to run the clock down.

But Shaftesbury levelled late to force extra-time and, after a see-saw game had reached 4-4, it finally tilted Brock's way when Carbayo-Borges struck with just seconds remaining.

Ollie Dennett, a dual-registered third-year scholar with Eastleigh, took a couple of players on and squared for the Fawley-based teenager who showed great composure to slot the ball under the goalkeeper.

Mitch Speechley-Price had earlier bagged a hat-trick for the Badgers with Mark Barker netting the other.

Discussing Brock's young hero Carbayo-Borges, McManus said: "He started with our under-18s last season and we promoted him to the first-team squad after seeing him in training.

"He's a very promising young lad and we've got high hopes for him, the same as we have for Noel McCarthy-Gardiner who's also made a very good impression



Pat McManus.

since we promoted him last season.

"Leon's a striker at under-18s level, but we play him on the wing. He's got a slight build, terrific balance and he's very quick.

"Between him and Noel, we've

got two great understudies for (experienced widemen) Will Tickle and Mark Barker. They're perfect natural replacements should we need to change shape or if either Will or Mark is injured."

While McManus would like to

take credit for pulling off "a managerial masterstroke" when he introduced young Carbayo-Borges at Shaftesbury, he was honest enough to admit that things didn't exactly go to plan.

"At 3-2 I sacrificed Will Tickle to waste a bit of time and I expected us to manage the game a bit better than we did," he said. "But we conceded a corner and they scored from that.

"It meant losing Will for the whole of extra-time, but it was no problem because Leon gave a really good account of himself.

"He scored a hat-trick for the under-18s in a 5-3 win over Moneyfields on Sunday, so he had a really good weekend!"

The progression of the young guns has helped Brock out of a hole while several first-team regulars have been struggling with injury.

Barker has soldiered on 60 per cent fit for the last month, while the likes of Matt Casey, Ronan Moore, Cas Newton, Matt Burt and Greg King have been in the wars.

"With the squad being ravaged as it is, we're relying on our really promising youngsters," said McManus. "We've been up against it, which made the result at Shaftesbury even more pleasing."

Brock's reward is a Vase trip to Godalming Town of the Combined Counties Premier Division next Saturday.

P.S. Leon wasn't the only member of the Carbayo-Borges household giving defenders the run-around last weekend.

His younger brother Carlos also scored a hat-trick for Brock's U14s in their Bournemouth Youth League game at home to Ringwood. They won 11-0!

NON LEAGUE



Construction starts on new £1m base

CONSTRUCTION has started on Alderbury FC's new £1-million base at Firs Road in the village.

The new playing facility will comprise three full-size, one three-quarter and two mini soccer pitches.

The pavilion will house the players' and officials' changing rooms and a clubroom overlooking the main pitch.

Martin Woodroffe, chairman of the South-

ampton Leaguers, said the Salisbury-based club, formed in 1903, had outgrown its old site a long time ago and had been working with the Longford Estate on plans to relocate to a larger ground for the past 12 years.

Alderbury have achieved the highest FA accreditation of Chartered Standard Community Club and currently run 14 teams catering for up to 300 children and 40 adults.

The new facility would not have been pos-

sible without the support and financial contributions of the Premier League and The FA Facilities Fund, Longford Estate, Sport England and Cleansing Service Group.

Although the build phase is now underway, additional sponsors are needed.

Businesses interested in becoming involved in this exciting, high-profile venture are asked to contact the club at alderburyfc@gmail.com.

Rams keep it clean at long last

IT wasn't so much Luke Kendall's winning goal that grabbed the attention at Love Lane last week.

It was the fact that, in beating Corsham 1-0 in the FA Vase, Petersfield Town kept their first clean sheet in a staggering 71 matches.

The last time the Rams had prevented the opposition scoring dated way back to a 2-0 win over Hanwell Town on March 30 last year.

For once the Rams looked rock-solid at the back against Corsham with 'keeper Matt Shortt rarely looking in danger of conceding.

The only goal arrived on 33 minutes when Kendall netted a low spot-kick after Luke Walker had been brought down as he rounded 'keeper Chris

Whites fail to land Town striker Scott

Wendy Gee



SWINDON Town striker Scott Twine did not join Salisbury after all.

Following reports that a one-month loan deal had been agreed with Steve Claridge's Whites, 18-year-old Twine has instead linked up with Vanarama National League South outfit Chippenham Town on a three-month deal.

He went straight into Chippenham's starting line-up at Dartford last Saturday, but the Bluebirds drew a blank in a 3-0 league defeat.

There were no such problems for Salisbury who, without Twine, romped to an 8-0 victory at Shortwood United in the Evo-Stik South West.

Nevertheless, manager Claridge was disappointed that the deal had fallen through.

He said: "We thought we had Scott and we sat on the deal for several days.

"We announced it when the paperwork was all ready to be signed, but they've obviously had a rethink and wanted him to go to a higher-ranked club, as is their right.

"The deal falling through had nothing to do with whether or when it was announced by us or whether we thought it was a formality.

"In the end there's nothing we can do when a club currently higher up the pyramid comes in for someone and the parent club thinks that is a better option for them.

"That's their choice and they do what they think is right by them and the player, though I do think we would have been a good place for the lad to develop."

Salisbury have proven pedigree in that department having massively helped Tommy Wright's de-



Scott Twine in action for Swindon.

velopment last season.

Sutton's ex-Otterbourne youngster scored an incredible 51 times in a prolific 93-goal partnership with Justin Bennett before returning to his parent club.

Summer signing Marvin Brooks took centre stage at Shortwood as the Whites powered up to fourth in the table.

The former Poole Town man plundered a hat-trick, sending out a warning sign to his old Dolphins teammates ahead of today's big

FA Cup second qualifying round clash between the sides.

Brooks headed against the bar with just seconds gone, but it was Lewis Benson who opened the scoring four minutes in when Flavio Tavares's cross cannoned off him.

Sam Roberts took aim from 25 yards for 2-0 and Brooks doubled that lead with a clever lob followed by a fine far-post header.

Tom Whelan got in on the act early in the second half before

Brooks spectacularly completed his hat-trick with a bicycle kick.

Kane O'Keefe headed home number seven and then, in added time, Benson's cross was turned in by Shortwood defender Sam Ockwell.

Shortwood boss Paul Meredith admitted: "It's just one of those days that come along now and then when you are not at it and you play a very good side that will hurt you every time they get an opportunity."



Snoddy.

Petersfield now face a tough trip to FA Vase newcomers Hamble Club in the second qualifying round next Saturday.

The merry Monks of Hamble celebrated their maiden appearance by beating Bemerton 3-1 in an all-Sydenhams Premier clash at 'The Abbey' - Nathan Lynch (2) and Liam Crook the scorers.

Baffins Milton - promoted hand-in-hand with Hamble Club last season - also kicked off their Vase campaign on a victorious note.

After falling behind to a James Sykes goal at Cowes, they hit back to win 3-1 through Tyler Moret, Blu Boam and Sam Willett.

It proved to be striker Moret's last game for the club before making a midweek switch to divisional rivals Horndean.

Baffins' reward is a home tie against Selsey of the Southern Combination Division One.

NON LEAGUE FIXTURES

Tuesday, September 19

HAMPSHIRE FA SENIOR CUP

Second round: Basingstoke Town v Gosport Borough, Blackfield & Langley v Folland Sports, Eastleigh v Aldershot Town, Fleet Spurs v Havant & Waterlooville, Fleet Town v Farnborough, Hartley Wintney v Brockenhurst, Horndean v Bournemouth Poppies, Moneyfields v Sholing, New Milton v AFC Portchester, Romsey Town v AFC Totton, Tadley Calleva v Bashley, Winchester City v East Cowes Vics.

ANDOVER OPEN CUP

First round: Andover Town v South Wonston Swifts.

FRIENDLY

Hayling Utd v Hampshire Premier League Rep Squad (7.30).

Wednesday, September 20

HAMPSHIRE FA SENIOR CUP

Second round: Alresford Town v Eversley & California, Cove v Hamble Club, Fareham Town v Christchurch.

PORTSMOUTH SENIOR CUP

First round: Locks Heath v Paulsgrove Res (7.30).

Saturday, September 23

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE

AFC Fylde v Woking, Aldershot v Leyton Orient, Boreham Wood v Ebbsfleet, Chester v Maidenhead, FC Halifax v Bromley, Guiseley v Dover, Hartlepool v Eastleigh, Maidstone v Gateshead, Solihull Moors v Dagenham & Redbridge, Sutton v Barrow, Torquay v Macclesfield, Tranmere v Wrexham.

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH

Bath City v Wealdstone, Bognor Regis v Gloucester, Braintree v Hungerford, Chippenham v Hemel Hempstead, East Thurrock v Truro City, Eastbourne Borough v Oxford City, Hampton & Richmond v Concord Rangers, Havant & Waterlooville v Welling, Poole Town v Chelmsford, Weston-super-Mare v Dartford, Whitehawk v St Albans.

EVO-STIK SOUTH

Premier: Dunstable v Dorchester, Farnborough v St Ives, Frome v Bishops Cleeve, Hitchin v Basingstoke, Kettering v Chesham, King's Lynn v Tiverton, Kings Langley v Banbury, Merthyr v Royston, Redditch v Biggleswade, St Neots v Slough, Stratford v Gosport Borough, Weymouth v Hereford.

West: Bideford v Wimborne, Bishops Cleeve v Taunton, Cinderford v Kidlington, Evesham v Barnstaple, Larkhall v AFC Totton, North Leigh v Shortwood, Paulton Rovers v Cirencester, Slimbridge v Bristol Manor Farm, Swindon Supermarine v Didcot, Winchester City v Mangotsfield, Yate v Salisbury.

FA VASE

Second qualifying round: AFC Portchester v Tadley Calleva, Alton v Amesbury Town, Baffins Milton Rovers v Selsey, Bashley v Hythe & Dibden, Calne Town v Downton, Fareham Town v Binfield, Godalming v Brockenhurst, Hamble Club v Petersfield Town, Hamworthy Utd v Lymington Town, Knaphill v Horndean, Midhurst & Easebourne v US Portsmouth, Newport IW v Alresford Town, Romsey Town v Bournemouth Poppies, Sandhurst v Ringwood, Swanage Town & Herston v Fawley AFC, Westbury Utd v Christchurch, Windsor v Whitechurch Utd.

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE

Premier Division: Blackfield & Langley v Bemerton HH, Cowes Sports v Andover, Portland v Sholing, Shaftesbury v Team Solent.

Division One: Andover NS v Weymouth Res, Folland Sports v East Cowes Vics, Laverstock & Ford v AFC Stoneham, Verwood v Totton & Eling.

NEW FOREST CARE HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE

Premier Division: Colden Common v Sway, Hayling Utd v Clanfield, Hedge End Rangers v Stockbridge, Liphook Utd v QK Southampton, Liss Athletic v Winchester Castle, Locks Heath v Fleetlands, Overton v Bush Hill, Paulsgrove v Infinity.

Division One: AFC Petersfield v South Wonston Swifts, Four Marks v Upham, Headley Utd v Netley Central Sports, Lyndhurst v Michelmarsh & Timbury. Combination Division: Bush Hill v Paulsgrove, Clanfield v Liphook, Fleetlands v Overton, QK Southampton v Hedge End Rangers, Winchester Castle v Headley Utd.

NON LEAGUE

Southgate praise for Verwood All Stars



VERWOOD All Stars have been awarded a £6,000 'Grow the Game' grant, attracting praise from England boss Gareth Southgate.

The grant provides a boost to grassroots football in Verwood, paving the way for the All Stars to branch out into youth and female teams.

Southgate, a Football Foundation ambassador, said: "I am so pleased Verwood All Stars have secured this 'Grow the Game' grant.

"The club has worked very

hard with Dorset FA and the Football Foundation to get more local people playing football so they can enjoy the many physical and mental benefits that come with playing regular sport."

'Grow the Game' is a £2.5m programme funded by The FA and The Football Foundation. It awards grants to grassroots clubs wishing to create new teams, especially among under-represented groups.

Verwood All Stars' chairman and first-team manager Conner

Jordan said: "We are a brand new club that takes pride in promoting local grassroots football.

"We started the club with the aim of being more of an academy to support the development of all football players, regardless of their gender or abilities, while maintaining a professional and competitive football set up.

"The Football Foundation has been excellent in supporting my club and offering the funding to ensure that everyone gets the equal football opportunities they deserve."

Terras pull second team out of Wessex

Wendy Gee



THE Sydenhams Wessex Division One has shrunk to 18 teams for the rest of the season following the withdrawal of Weymouth Reserves.

The league were this week advised that the Terras had disbanded their second string with immediate effect to concentrate on their senior side's Evo-Stik South Premier promotion push and the reintroduction of a youth section.

All fixtures relating to Weymouth Reserves have been cancelled and their record expunged.

Weymouth's decision coincides with the resignation of reserve team boss Bradley Asagba due to a "lifestyle reorientation."

Asagba's charges had made a poor start to the season, winning just two and losing six of their eight games and, at the time of their withdrawal, they sat 15th in the 19-strong division.

This was Weymouth Reserves' second season in the Wessex ranks.

They were voted in at last summer's league AGM despite several club representatives – most notably Hythe & Dibden chairman Dave Cox – having grave reserves about allowing a reserve team to enter the league.

Even SWL chairman Ian Hoare admitted he didn't think it was "right for the league" but he stressed that, in keeping with the FA's standardised rules, Weymouth had qualified for promotion through league position and ground grading and were "part of the system."

An SWL statement regarding Weymouth Reserves' withdrawal said: "We have been advised by Weymouth Football Club that they have disbanded their reserve side with immediate effect to concentrate all their energies and finances on their senior side.

"Therefore all fixtures relating to Weymouth Reserves are cancelled as of now and their record will be expunged from the League on Full-Time in due course.

"This casts no reflection whatsoever on Ray Pearce (reserve team secretary) and his colleagues who have looked after all aspects of the side so well since their joining the League and who are obviously greatly upset by the decision.

"The withdrawal will be dealt with under league rules."

Asagba maintained that "management is 100 per cent for me" despite ending his tenure at the Bob Lucas Stadium.

He is particularly proud of the development of young players during his time at Weymouth and said: "I'll look back quite fondly in terms of where the club was when I took it over.

"There was a slow start last season but we got to mid-table and finished with the longest unbeaten run in the Wessex League.

"Players going on to play for the first team and then higher with other teams is something I'll look back on as a success."

A Weymouth FC statement regarding the reserve team's withdrawal explained: "The difficult decision was not taken lightly and was made with a very heavy heart.

"It is based on future restructuring of the club's set-up and the successful reintroduction of the youth section this season."



Bradley Asagba

NON LEAGUE



Wetherick returns in spectacular style



JARED Wetherick marked his return from suspension in spectacular style for Newport IW.

The St George's Park targetman buried all four goals for the Islanders in their 4-3 Sydenhams League Cup win over Tadley Calleva.

The tie was a potential banana skin for the Premier Division hosts against lower league Tadley, but they just about managed to swerve it.

Port led 2-0 at the interval and, after Brett Denham had

pulled one back, ex-Cowes man Wetherick completed his hat-trick for 3-1.

But in the space of a minute, Calleva levelled matters through Alex Charlick and Paul Coventry before Wetherick pulled off another masterstroke to send Port through.

Gathering the ball on the edge of the area, he expertly turned his marker before firing past Kieron Greene in the Tadley goal.

That win continued a

knockout week for Newport who had already progressed into the FA Vase second qualifying round.

They beat Fleet Spurs 5-2 through Emerson Tattersall (3) and Charlie Urry (2), booking them a home tie against Richard Luffman's Alresford Town next Saturday.

Cowes Sports and East Cowes Vics both exited the Vase at the first qualifying round stage, beaten 3-1 at home to Baffins Milton and Calne Town respectively.

Burbidge makes instant impact

Wendy Gee



LUKE Burbidge made an immediate impact on his Wimborne Town debut - despite them falling to a 3-1 defeat to Bristol Manor Farm.

The high-riding visitors were already in the box seat at Cuthbury before Burbidge, on a month's loan from National League South outfit Poole Town, bagged a 78th-minute consolation.

It was a third successive Evo-Stik South West reverse for the Magpies, but manager Matty Holmes is hopeful Burbidge can help turn their flagging fortunes around.

"It was a really good home debut from Luke," said Holmes.

"He has huge talent and, when we were made aware that he wanted to come over, we were quite surprised.

"He worked with my brother and I at Bournemouth years ago and he knows what we want to try to do at Wimborne in playing a possession game.

"We are delighted to have him for the month and getting him back enjoying his football. Hopefully, he can improve us as well."

Skipper Scott Arnold made his return from injury, but Holmes revealed that star striker Toby Holmes had broken his toe in the clash at Winchester City and faced another two weeks out.

Prior to the Manor Farm

game manager Holmes had warned his players that they would have to "learn quickly."

He said: "We are giving them opportunities and we are sticking with them but, at some stage, if they don't learn and they don't take it on board, then I have to look to change things personnel-wise.

"We want to stick with the boys because they know the way we want to play, but they have to seriously buck up their ideas. If they don't, then we will have to look to move things around."

Holmes added: "This league is ruthless, it's harder than last season.

"You have lost Hereford but the teams that have come in, like Bristol Manor Farm, have invested really well and it is going to be a tough season.

"They are building a head of steam and are trying to do something.

"If we don't start picking up the points we should, we could get dragged down the bottom and the season would fizzle out."

Arnold's return should help matters. The influential defender picked up an ankle injury in pre-season following his recovery from a hip operation.

"Getting Arnie back, a player who has huge experience, might just help the young full-backs and give them a bit of guidance," said the boss.

"His communication is vital."



Luke Burbidge

Browne: We appeared to give up the ghost

SIMON Browne felt Portland United "appeared to give up the ghost" during their 5-2 Sydenhams League Cup loss to Amesbury Town at Grove Corner.

Browne stated that the League Cup "was not too important" a competition, but was disappointed with the manner of his side's demise in "farfarcical conditions".

"The competition was not too important, but the manner in which we have exited has not left me with a particularly good feeling," he said.

"We played in farfarcical conditions in wind and rain. It did make the game a bit of a lottery, but



Simon Browne

Amesbury have come away with a win and we haven't.

"We appeared to give up the ghost in the second half. Again, a couple of performances were less than satisfactory."

Browne fielded a weakened side, but the Blues - the reigning Sydenhams Premier champions - still featured several regular starters.

Despite conceding five goals, debut-making goalkeeper Taylor Hibbs gave a good account of himself.

"Taylor was down in the dumps, but I thought he did very well," said Browne. "I certainly wouldn't be too harsh on him for what happened."

Cameron George did the bulk of the damage with a hat-trick for Amesbury, backed by Cameron Roach and Kieran Stephens.

Amesbury now travel to Lymington Town in round two.

Aguero in sight of City record

Sergio Aguero's hat-trick sent Manchester City top of the Premier League as Pep Guardiola's men thrashed Watford 6-0 at Vicarage Road.

Aguero spearheaded this rampant triumph, laying on a goal for Gabriel Jesus and inching ever closer to City's all-time goalscoring record.

Kevin De Bruyne conjured two assists from his limitless stock of tricks, while Nicolas Otamendi's header and Raheem Sterling's penalty completed City's muscle-flexing rout against a side who had won 2-0 at St Mary's a week earlier.

Aguero took his City tally to 175 goals, now just three shy of breaking Eric Brook's club record of 177 that has stood since 1939.

City host point-less and goalless Crystal Palace in their next Premier League encounter - in this form Aguero could easily claim another treble and break Brook's record.

The 29-year-old remains so confident in his scoring touch even as to eschew the late spot-kick, letting Sterling step up and strike home the sixth goal instead.

Watford started the day with hopes of reaching the top-flight's summit for the first time since September 1982, but they ended it having leaked 11 goals without reply in their last two home league meetings with City.



Sergio Aguero

The Hornets closed last term with a 5-0 home defeat at City's hands, and not even new boss Marco Silva's growing influence could do anything to stop a quickfire repeat of that May 21 humbling.

De Bruyne could have had four assists and a goal inside half an hour. Instead the peerless Belgian had to be content with laying on the opener.

The sheer speed of his teasing, whipped free-kick neutered Watford's defenders and Aguero's deft header did the rest.

The sense of a mismatch was growing just three minutes later when Jesus cantered down the left and slid through to David Silva, who served up Aguero's second strike on a platter.

Aguero completed the simplest of tasks with a gleeful tap-in, that floored Watford on the half-hour.

The irresistible visitors twisted the knife still further when Aguero turned provider for strike partner Jesus.

De Bruyne's accurate corner picked Watford's defensive alignment apart again, and Otamendi powered home the header.

Aguero had no intention of cutting short Watford's horror-show either, scything through the static defence before delicately rolling home his hat-trick goal.

When Sterling was felled in the Watford box late on, the former Liverpool forward convinced both Aguero and Guardiola to let him take the spot-kick, which he scored.

NON LEAGUE

Hometown boy Kayne is Barry's goal hero



Kayne McLaggon

FORMER Saints and Salisbury striker Kayne McLaggon was the toast of his hometown club Barry Town last weekend.

The 26-year-old signed for the Cardiff area club - newly promoted back into the top flight of Welsh football - during the summer after four seasons at Merthyr Town.

After only one point from their opening three JD Welsh Premier League games, McLaggon's double gave Barry their opening win - 2-0 at home to Newtown.

A former U17 and U19 Wales

international, Kayne arrives from Evostik Southern Premier League outfit Merthyr Town, where he spent four successful seasons.

McLaggon was one of numerous Saints academy graduates given a chance during the club's Championship relegation season of 2008/09.

He made his debut as a sub at Plymouth in December 2008 and his home debut, again off the bench, against Reading a few days later.

McLaggon went on to score once

in his seven appearances - in a 2-2 draw at Norwich in one of Mark Wotte's first games in charge.

Released by Saints at the end of 2010/11, McLaggon joined Salisbury and formed a prolific strike partnership with Jake Reid.

He returned to the professional game in the summer of 2011, signing for Bristol Rovers, but only played one first team game for the Gas.

Released after just one season, he joined Weston-super-Mare before returning to his home country to sign for Merthyr.

Killick: I'm not going to rip it all up now!

Wendy Gee



DEFIANT boss Tom Killick insists he will stick with the nucleus of his Poole Town squad following a desperately disappointing start to the Vanarama National League South season.

The Dolphins' wretched run continued as they followed Saturday's 2-0 defeat at Wellstone with a 4-1 reverse at Wealdstone on Monday, leaving them third to bottom with just eight points from 11 games.

Although Killick admitted the mood in the camp was "unhappy", he said he was determined not to make drastic changes in a bid to turn their dismal form around.

"We have had heartbreaking moments but, in terms of a run of results, there is nothing that has ever come close to compare with this," he confessed.

"Suddenly, you are in a run like this and you start doubting everything you have ever done.

"Sometimes it's easy to completely change things that have worked consistently over the years.

"It's almost easy for me to say 'right, the pure fact of the matter is this group of players are not good enough', therefore you pretty much change as many of the players as you can.

"There has to be a balance. You have to try to change things to a degree but you can go too far the other way and rip

up everything.

"Why would you do that when it has brought us a lot of success over the years?"

"I am not prepared to do that. I will stick, by and large, by this group of players and, if it ends up being the end of me, it will be the end of me. That is how I will deal with it."

Asked whether it was too early to suggest Poole were in a relegation battle, Killick was honest in his assessment of the Dolphins' predicament.

"No, I don't think it is too early because the way they have front-loaded the fixtures, we are a quarter of the way through the season and we have eight points," he said.

"We are going to have to produce a good run of results to get ourselves in a more stable position, so already you would have to say the objectives have drifted a little."

Former Winchester City hot-shot Warren Bentley scored his fourth goal in as many games at Wealdstone, but Poole had already conceded three times in a disastrous six-minute spell at the end of the first half.

Ex-Salisbury striker Dan Fitchett rubbed salt in their wounds with a late strike. It was Poole's sixth defeat in their last seven games.

"When morale is low there are 20 unhappy footballers, an unhappy manager, an unhappy assistant manager and an unhappy coach. It's not an amazing place to be," Killick admitted.

"But you just have to try to stick with it - and that's what we're determined to do."



Tom Killick

NON LEAGUE



Stones loss is no laughing matter for Spitfires boss

Wendy Gee



DIAMOND, Christmas tree, 4-3-2-1.

You can bet your bottom dollar Richard Hill has considered every conceivable formation to try and bring the best out of his Eastleigh side in the National League this season.

There was, however, one team set-up he had completely overlooked... until a helpful fan came up with a solution.

"I had a very nice message from a fan telling me I should be playing 4-3-4 and he or she actually named the players for each position," smiled Hill.

"I don't know who sent it, it was just a number. It could have been a kiddy for all I know.

"But it was quite a good-natured message and I actually found it quite funny.

"I messaged back to say '4-3-4? Are you sure?' and they assured me they were.

"So I asked them what the plan was. Should we line up with one extra player or without a goalkeeper?

"It's easy being a football manager, isn't it?!" he chuckled.

Laughter was in short supply on Tuesday, however, as the Spitfires were condemned to their first home defeat of the campaign by Maidstone United, dropping them to 15th in the table.

Having bemoaned his side for not passing the ball well in Saturday's 0-0 stalemate at Guiseley, Hill saw a vast improvement in that department against Jay Saunders' Stones.

But, for all their neat approach work, the Spitfires looked toothless in front of goal without injured top scorer Ben Williamson.

Maidstone's former West Ham, Burnley and AFC Bournemouth (loan) striker Zavon Hines showed them how it should be done, scoring with a cracking strike from the edge



Eastleigh boss Richard Hill.

of the box just a minute or two after clattering the post with a near identical effort.

The Spitfires gambled by throwing on attacking trio Craig McAllister, Chris Zebroski and Ross Stearn, but it took two fine saves by Stack and near misses from Stuart Lewis and Joe Pigott to spare them further damage.

"I think I've upset someone," said Hill afterwards.

"The first half we looked bright, we looked decent, we played with a bit of tempo and

picked up a lot of second balls.

"But again we weren't good enough in the last third. It keeps happening and I keep saying it, but we've got to be better."

The conditions didn't help with the game played in swirling wind and driving rain, but Hill was not looking for excuses. The shot-shy Spitfires have scored just nine goals in their opening ten games.

"We knew the forecast and the weather was coming in," he said. "That's no excuse for how

we just faded out of the game in the last 20 minutes with a whimper. That disappoints me more than anything.

"In the first 15 minutes of the second half we created one or two little half-chances, but half-chances are not good enough. We've got to find some goals from somewhere."

"When you have lots and possession and you're in the ascendancy you need to score goals and we've not been doing that. We've not done it all season to date."

'No way has Delano dived'

MAIDSTONE United boss Jay Saunders rushed to Delano Sam-Yorke's defence over accusations of diving during his side's 1-0 National League win at Eastleigh.

Sam-Yorke appeared to go down deliberately in the box under pressure from Callum Howe early in the second half.

After receiving lengthy treatment on the pitch, he eventually made way for sub Johan Ter Horst.

But, all the while, referee Alan Young was waiting, yellow card in hand, ready to book the former Basingstoke Town man for simulation.

Saunders felt the punishment was unjustified, explaining: "He's gone down because his hamstring's tightened up.

"He hasn't dived."

Saunders did, however, accuse Eastleigh of a "blatant dive" which very nearly won them a penalty.

The Spitfires new signing Gary McSheffrey went down under Reece Prestedge's challenge on the right edge of the area and, initially, Mr Young pointed to the spot.

Eastleigh defender Ayo Obileye seized the ball ready to take the penalty but, after discussions with his assistant, the ref awarded a free-kick instead.

Even then, Saunders believed the official got it wrong.

"First of all, it wasn't a free kick, it



Delano Sam-Yorke.

was a blatant dive," he said.

"And secondly, it was outside the area. I don't quite know what the ref was doing there."

In the same fixture last year Eastleigh had overwhelmed Maidstone 3-0 in front of a rocking 4,114 free-entry crowd, spurred on by two-goal Luke Coulson.

Saunders recalled: "We were outclassed here last year. I won't hide from the fact.

"I remember going away saying 'they're the best team we've played this season'.

"No disrespect to anyone who was here at the time, but I said to (assistant) Nicky Southall just as we kicked off tonight (Tuesday) that I feel a lot more confident coming here because it looked like we had some men around the team and more experience."

That confidence proved well-founded as a 69th-minute Zavon Hines strike fired the Stones to victory.

Tuesday's game saw the return of Maidstone's former Eastleigh favourite Jai Reason to the Silverlake.

Job done, he went off to generous applause from both sets of fans deep into stoppage time.

Saunders said: "I thought this was the right game for Jai. Him, Reece (Prestedge) and Stuart (Lewis) were excellent in midfield. They dominated in there."

Contact the Echo sports desk on 02380 424515

Dismal starts in to flight

Roy Hodgson has been appointed as Crystal Palace manager looking to rescue them from a nightmare start to the season.

The Eagles lost all four of their Premier League games under Frank de Boer without scoring a goal, the first top-flight side since Preston in the 1924-25 season to suffer that fate.

Eight previous teams in the Premier League era have started with four defeats, though, and here the Sports Pink looks at how they fared

SAINTS (2012-13)

Suffered a horror start five years ago after winning promotion from the Championship under Nigel Adkins. They bounced back in their fifth game with a 4-1 home win over Aston Villa and Mauricio Pochettino, who replaced Adkins in January 2013, secured their top-flight status with a 14th-placed finish.

WEST HAM (2010-11)



Nigel Adkins

The Hammers avoided entering this chart for a second time by beating Huddersfield on Monday night, having started with three straight defeats - albeit all away from home. Their poor start seven years ago contributed to them finishing bottom.

POMPEY (2009-10)

A truly woeful campaign for Pompey began with seven straight defeats under Paul Hart and ended with the club finishing bottom with 19 points. Hart was sacked in November 2009 and the club finished bottom of the table, not helped by a points deduction for entering administration.

SUNDERLAND (2005-06)

The Black Cats lost five in a row from the start of the season under Mick McCarthy in a campaign which saw them finish bottom of the league with just 15 points, the second-lowest PL total ever.

Continued on facing page

NON LEAGUE

Life and times of

Simon Carter



A DECADE ago, new Eastleigh signing Gary McSheffrey was among the most prolific strikers in the Championship.

He won a £4m move to Birmingham after scoring 17 goals in all competitions for Coventry City in 2005/06.

Then, in his first season at St Andrews, he justified his large price tag with 17 more goals as the Blues won promotion to the Premier League.

Now 35, he arrived at the Silverlake Stadium as a free agent.

Here, the Sports Pink looks back at McSheffrey's career.

1998/99

The Coventry-born McSheffrey created a Premier League record when he made his debut for the Sky Blues in February 1999.

He was just 16 years and 198 days old when Gordon Strachan brought him off the bench during the closing stages of Coventry's 4-1 win at Aston Villa - ex-Pompey striker John Aloisi and George Boateng both scoring twice.

As a result, McSheffrey became the youngest player ever to play in the Premier League.

He held that record for over four years until Aaron Lennon made his Leeds United debut at a younger age in August 2003.

That short cameo appearance was the limit of McSheffrey's first team appearances that season.

1999/00

Was limited to just three early season sub appearances in the Premier League, but made two starts in the League Cup at Tranmere.

His debut was a game to forget, as the Sky Blues were thrashed 5-1 at Prenton Park against lower division opposition.

McSheffrey also started the Highfield Road return, where Coventry won 3-1.

2000/01

McSheffrey didn't make a single first team appearance as Coventry were relegated from the Premier League - ending an unbroken record of 34 years in the top flight.

2001/02

On December 15, at Burnley, McSheffrey was handed his first ever league start - but it didn't come for Coventry.

Instead, it came on loan at Stockport County. The Cheshire club are now in the sixth tier of English football but back then



Gary McSheffrey, main picture, tangles with Danny Butterfield as Coventry crash 4-0 at St Mary's in April 2012 - the win which took Saints back to the top flight. Left - McSheffrey is outjumped by Jermaine Wright while playing for Birmingham at St Mary's in 2006.

were Coventry's rivals in the Championship.

McSheffrey, who had made two sub appearances in the league prior to his debut - one for Coventry and one for Stockport - made an instant impact by scoring an 11th minute opener at Turf Moor.

After making five league appearances for the Hatters, McSheffrey returned to Coventry.

In his first game back, he came off the bench to notch his first goal for the Sky Blues in a 3-1 win at Crystal Palace in January 2002.

During the season he appeared for the England under-20 side that beat Portugal 1-0 in the first ever international held at Saints' new St Mary's stadium.

He came on as a second half sub for Jay Bothroyd. Other names

in the England side that night included Peter Crouch, Steve Sidwell, Paul Konchesky, Andrew Johnson and Micah Richards.

2002/03

McSheffrey began the season by scoring Coventry's winner in a 2-1 home success against Sheffield United on the opening day.

NON LEAGUE

£4m man Gary



Above - McSheffrey in action for England under-20s at St Mary's in November 2001. Top - McSheffrey, right, in action for Coventry against Swindon.

Three more goals followed by McSheffrey welcomed in October by scoring his first professional hat-trick.

He netted a treble in Coventry's 8-0 League Cup rout of Rushden & Diamonds, who didn't help their cause by having two men sent off.

McSheffrey only netted one more goal in his final 24 games of the season - again against Crystal

Palace at Selhurst Park.

There was also a first ever professional red card, in a 2-2 home draw against Wimbledon.

2003/04

McSheffrey started the season on loan at Luton in League 2, and made a big impression.

He scored eight times in his first

12 league and cup appearances, but only managed one in his next seven.

One of the games he didn't score in was Luton's 6-3 hammering at Bournemouth - Steve Fletcher (2), Brian Stock (2), Garreth O'Connor and Wade Elliott on target for the Cherries.

Making his first Coventry appearance of the season in the FA

Cup third round, McSheffrey celebrated by scoring in his side's 2-1 win.

He then struck twice in his second league outing for Coventry in 2003/04 - a 6-1 romp at midlands rivals Walsall.

A run of seven league goals in nine appearances underlined his growing potential, with City enjoying two four-goal home wins in the space of four days.

McSheffrey scored his final two goals of the campaign in the penultimate game, where Coventry won 5-2 at Gillingham.

McSheffrey's new assistant manager - Andy Hesenthaler - started the game for the Gills that day. He didn't finish it, though, as he was sent off!

McSheffrey's double that day helped him finish as Coventry's leading league scorer with 11 goals in 16 starts plus three off the bench.

It was a fine effort, especially considering he didn't play his first league game until the January.

2004/05

Though he returned to Luton for a short loan spell early in the season, McSheffrey ended the campaign as Coventry's leading marksman for the second year running.

This time he struck 12 times in 31 starts plus seven off the bench - ending up with one more goal than future Saints striker Stern John.

McSheffrey also scored twice in an FA Cup tie against Colchester, and ended the season by scoring twice in a 6-2 win against Derby in what was the last ever game played at Highfield Road.

2005/06

McSheffrey struck 15 times in the Championship, again finishing as Coventry's top scorer for the third season running.

Only four players netted more in the second tier that term - Marlon King of Watford (21), Kevin Doyle of Reading (18), Cameron Jerome of Cardiff (18) and Dave Kitson of Reading (18).

McSheffrey again scored twice in a thumping home win over Derby - the Rams thrashed 6-1 on their first visit to the Ricoh Arena.

The striker also scored two goals in the cups, including an FA Cup winner at Brighton.

2006/07

McSheffrey played the first handful of games for Coventry in the new Championship season - including a 2-0 loss at St Mary's - before making a £4m move to midlands rivals Birmingham City.

Continued on page 20

Dismal top flight starts

from facing page

McCarthy was sacked in March 2006 with the club 16 points adrift at the foot of the table.

M'BORO (2001-02)

Boro secured survival despite taking no points from the first 12 available under Steve McClaren. The future England manager led the Teessiders to a 12th-placed finish.

SAINTS (1998-99)

A second appearance in the list for Saints, who this time lost five in a row, rounded off by a 4-0 loss at Newcastle. The club kept faith in Dave Jones and stayed up on this occasion as well, finishing 17th as the campaign ended with three straight wins.

A VILLA (1997-98)

Brian Little's men had



Dave Jones

that sinking feeling 20 years ago but climbed all the way to seventh by May and won eight of their last 10 Premier League games - meaning half of the teams on the list have survived their horror starts, including Saints twice.

SWINDON (1993-94)

The other four have finished rock-bottom though, including John Gorman's men who opened with four defeats and took until November 24 to register a first win, at the 16th attempt. The Wiltshire club finished 13 points adrift of safety after the 42-game season.

It is also worth mentioning Ian Branfoot's Saints as well. Saints inflicted the fourth straight loss on the Robins with a 5-1 romp at The Dell. But, in their first eight games of the season, they lost the other seven - scoring just twice. Branfoot survived the axe, but only until the following January.

Ibra's great expectation

Zlatan Ibrahimovic expects Manchester United to achieve great things this season - and to return from injury better than ever.

Written off by many upon switching Paris St Germain for Old Trafford last summer, the veteran striker silenced the doubters by netting 28 goals in his maiden campaign in English football.

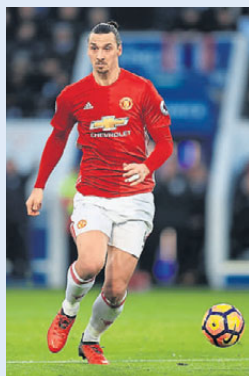
Ibrahimovic scored in both the EFL Cup and Community Shield successes at Wembley - the former a two-goal show against Saints - as well as playing a key role in United's triumphant Europa League campaign.

Five months on from his serious injury and the striker is making impressive progress in his recovery from knee ligament damage.

And, having initially been released in the summer, has been rewarded with a contract until the end of the season.

It is a campaign Ibrahimovic clearly believes can end in glory.

United are back in the Champions League and entered this weekend top of the Premier League, with the 35-year-old well aware of the fact Jose Mourinho has won the title in his second season during all five reigns of major clubs.



Zlatan Ibrahimovic

"We can achieve great things," said Ibrahimovic, whose teammates host Everton on Sunday before a trip to St Mary's next Saturday.

"We have to remember the second year of Jose Mourinho is always the best one.

"This year will be very exciting and with these new players the team is stronger, and I expect us to do great things.

"I'm just waiting for the moment to get back to the team and to play with them and enjoy the moments."

A return before Christmas is on the cards for the former Sweden striker, who could reportedly even be back as early as November.

Ibrahimovic has downplayed his injury as a "little break for a small injury", although patience has been key during rehabilitation.

"I feel good," Ibrahimovic said. "I have trained every day since I had my knee operated on, there is no vacation.

"It's a new challenge but I am strong mentally and when I focus on an objective nothing can stop me.

"I will go through everything, it doesn't matter what's in my way, I will break everything to reach my goal."

NON LEAGUE

Ups and downs for McSheffrey

From page 19

After six blanks in the Championship, McSheffrey got off the mark for his new club with a double strike in a League Cup win over Wrexham.

He broke his league duck against Leicester, before scoring twice in a 2-0 home derby win against West Bromwich Albion.

McSheffrey's second professional hat-trick came in December 2006 when he struck three goals in a 3-1 home win over Preston.

Ex-Saint Brett Ormerod had replied to McSheffrey's first half double, before he completed his treble from the penalty spot in the 89th minute.

That treble formed part of a six-goal haul in the space of four matches - all wins, with Birmingham netting 13 times - that catapulted the Blues firmly into the promotion race.

And even though McSheffrey failed to score in his final 13 league appearances, it was a race which ended with him winning promotion.

2007/08

It took McSheffrey 14 games to get off the mark in the Premier League.

His first ever PL goal came in Birmingham's 3-2 success at White Hart Lane in December 2007 - and it came from the penalty spot.

McSheffrey would go on to score two more league goals that season - against Middlesbrough and Manchester City - and both of those were spot-kicks as well.

At the end of the campaign, McSheffrey and his club were back in the Championship.

2008/09

McSheffrey played the first seven games of the season - including a 2-0 League Cup loss at St Mary's - before a knee injury ruled him out until early March.

After playing just once for City, though, he joined Nottingham Forest on loan. There he only played four games before the knee injury flared up again and he returned to his parent club for treatment.

2009/10

McSheffrey struggled to get into the Birmingham team which had returned to the top flight after a year's absence. He only managed five league appearances prior to joining Leeds on loan. There he played 10 League 1 games, includ-



Gary McSheffrey, above right, and (below) on signing for Eastleigh recently.



ing a 1-0 loss at St Mary's. McSheffrey managed just one goal, in a 2-1 home loss to Walsall - but Leeds still ended up winning automatic promotion.

2010/11

Returning to Coventry after being released by Birmingham, McSheffrey enjoyed a fine run of four goals in five matches in the autumn. But he only managed a further four goals in 30 other appearances.

2011/12

McSheffrey scored eight league goals again as the Sky Blues were relegated - their fate sealed with a last-day 4-0 hammering at promoted Saints. He also grabbed Coventry's consolation in a 2-1 FA Cup third round home defeat to Saints.

2012/13

Played 43 games for Coventry, but scored just twice. Was close to

reaching his first major cup final, but the Sky Blues lost to Crewe in the Northern area final of the JPT.

2013/14

On being released by Coventry, McSheffrey joined League 2 Chesterfield. But he only made two league starts for the Spireites before moving again in January to fourth tier rivals Scunthorpe. He played 12 times and failed to score as the Iron still won promotion.

2014/15

Was a regular in the Scunthorpe side, making 35 league starts plus a further six off the bench. Scored 10 goals in 50 appearances.

2015/16

Scored six goals in 28 league and cup appearances for the Iron, prior to joining Doncaster on loan. Scored on his debut, but that was his only goal in seven games as Rovers were relegated to League 2.

2016/17

Signed permanently by Doncaster, he had to wait until January to play his first game. Made three starts and nine sub appearances as Rovers won promotion.



PINK

Froome records a historic Vuelta victory



Chris Froome

Chris Froome has won La Vuelta, becoming the first man since 1978 to win the Tour de France and the Vuelta in the same year.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at the race in numbers.

1 - Froome is the first Briton to win the Vuelta in its 72-year history.

3 - Froome joins Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault as the only men to have won the Tour and the Vuelta in the same year.

27 - days between the end of this year's Tour de France and the start of La Vuelta. Froome is

the first rider to win the double since the Vuelta moved to its current spot in the calendar.

5 - combined with his four Tour de France titles, Froome is blazing a trail as Britain's most successful Grand Tour rider. Sir Bradley Wiggins is the only other Briton to have won one.

2 - stage wins for Froome in this year's Vuelta, in contrast to the Tour where he completed the rare feat of winning the general classification without taking a single stage.

19 - Froome finished 19 of the 21 stages in the leader's red jersey.

3 - riders who wore the red jersey this year - Rohan Dennis,

Yves Lampaert and Froome.

3 - classifications won by Froome, who also took the points leader's green jersey and the white jersey as leader of the combination classification.

1 - number of stage wins for Spanish riders in their home grand tour this year after Alberto Contador took stage 20. Only once in history, in 1996, has Spain failed to win a single stage.

21 - seconds, Froome's greatest deficit behind the red jersey, when Lampaert held it after stage two.

2:15 - Froome finished two minutes and 15 seconds clear of second-placed Vincenzo Nibali.

How ex-England bosses have fared

Simon Carter



Roy Hodgson has taken up his first managerial post since departing as England coach after his appointment by Crystal Palace.

Here, the Sports Pink examines the path taken by some of Hodgson's predecessors as England boss.

Sam Allardyce - 2016

Just three months after being sacked by England due to a corruption scandal that erupted a mere one match into his reign, Allardyce returned to management at Crystal Palace, rescuing the Eagles from the threat of relegation, before stepping down at the end of the 2016-17 season.

Fabio Capello - 2008-12

Capello was in the twilight of his managerial career when he became England coach on a reported annual salary of £6million, but he went on to oversee Russia until he was sacked in 2015 and in June took over at Chinese club Jiangsu Suning.

Steve McClaren - 2006-7

Sacked by England when they failed to qualify for Euro 2008, McClaren looked to rebuild his reputation with spells on the continent at FC Twente and Wolfsburg, guiding Twente to the Eredivisie



Glenn Hoddle

title in 2010. Posts at Nottingham Forest, Derby and Newcastle have followed, but he has struggled to make an impact.

Sven-Goran Eriksson - 2001-06

Apart from a break in 2006,

Eriksson, the first foreign manager appointed by the Football Association, has remained involved in the game, headlined on these shores by unsuccessful spells at Manchester City (where his last game in charge was an 8-1 thrashing at Middlesbrough) and Leicester. Spent the last four years in China.

Kevin Keegan - 1999-2000

Won the Division One title as his Manchester City side scored 108 goals to earn promotion in 2001, and then finished ninth in the top flight the following season. Left City in 2005 and later returned to Newcastle in 2008, but his second spell ended in less than a year after he fell out with the board.

Glenn Hoddle 1996-99

Forced to resign as England boss following comments made about disabled people, the Spurs legend was back in football in January 2000 in highly controversial circumstances. With Saints having decided to place Dave Jones on gardening leave to fight child abuse allegations, chairman Rupert Lowe and his board decided on Hoddle as his replacement. There was an obvious link - Saints director Keith Wiseman had been chairman of the FA during Hoddle's time as national boss. Hoddle walked out on Saints in March 2001 to take up the Spurs job. Sacked in September 2003 after a home loss to Saints, Hoddle was later appointed Wolves boss - but left in 2006 and has not worked at a professional club since.

Sloane wins first slam

Sloane Stephens defeated Madison Keys to win her first grand slam title at the US Open.

It was a first grand slam final for the 24-year-old, who needed just 61 minutes to post a 6-3 6-0 victory.

Here, the Sports Pink picks out five things to know about Stephens.

1. Stephens' athleticism is no surprise given her genes. She is the daughter of swimmer Sybil Smith and professional American football player John Stephens. Her father left the family home when she was a toddler but they were reconciled many years later before he was killed in a car accident in 2009.

2. Stephens was introduced to tennis aged nine by her mother and stepfather, Sheldon Farrell, who died of cancer when she was 14. She shared a hugely emotional hug with Smith after the match and then paid tribute to her, saying: "I think parents don't get enough credit. When I was 11 years old, my mom took me to a tennis academy. One of the directors there told my mom that I'd be lucky if I was a Division II player and I got a scholarship."

3. Stephens first came close to winning a grand slam title four-and-a-half years ago in Australia. She beat Serena Williams in the quarter-finals before losing to



Victoria Azarenka. Afterwards, Stephens went public about what she perceived as a snub by Williams, who had been described as her mentor. "She's not said one word to me, not spoken to me, not said hi, not looked my way, not been in the same room with me since I played her in Australia," Stephens said. "They think she's so friendly and she's so this and she's so that - no, that's not reality." Stephens later apologised.

4. Stephens' boyfriend is USA football international Jozy Altidore, who she met at school. Altidore was unable to be at the final because he was playing for Toronto FC in the MLS but his mother shouted the result to him from the stands during the first half. It was a good day all round for the couple, with Altidore scoring twice in a 4-0 victory over the San Jose Earthquakes.

5. Stephens is happiest away from the court when she is lying in bed in her pyjamas with the fire and the TV on eating takeaway. Her current favourite show is The Blacklist and she had to keep her focus when James Spader, one of the stars of the show, was picked out on the big screen in the stands during the final.

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The best St Legers ever

The 2017 St Leger was being held this weekend. Here, the Sports Pink looks back at some of the classics ...

NIJINSKY, 1970

In winning the St Leger, the Vincent O'Brien-trained colt joined an illustrious roll of honour as he became the 12th horse - and still the most recent - to secure the Triple Crown. It was an effortless victory as Lester Piggott delivered the 2-7 favourite on the bridle to stroll to the front and ease home for a no-fuss length triumph. However, the colt's preparation had been hurried because of illness and he lost more weight than expected. He wasn't the same horse when he subsequently lost his unbeaten record in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

DUNFERMLINE, 1977

Silver Jubilee year was memorable for the Queen for many reasons, and amid the flag-waving and the street parties she was also the proud owner of a dual-Classical winner. Dunfermline had already won the Oaks, but she was up against a formidable rival on Town Moor in the shape of the unbeaten Alleged. The pair had a tremendous tussle all the way to the line, following which there was a lengthy stewards' inquiry. The filly's stamina won the day, and Alleged went on to win the Arc twice.

CUT ABOVE, 1981

The 1981 renewal is best remembered not for its winner, but for the shock defeat of the legendary Shergar. The 4-9 favourite had made hacks of his rivals in the Derby, but this was to be no lap of honour as he could manage only a leg-weary fourth as the 28-1 winner swept past him. Shergar was retired from racing two weeks later, and his terrible fate is now part of racing's folklore.

OH SO SHARP, 1985

Sheikh Mohammed's wonderful three-year-old completed the fillies' Triple Crown of 1000 Guineas, Oaks and St Leger with her victory on Town Moor. She had conjured a thrilling triumph from a bad position at Newmarket to win by two short heads, and sluced in by six lengths at Epsom. She was not at her best come Leger time, but Sir Henry Cecil's tough, versatile performer was still to good for her opponents and won going away under Steve Cauthen.

USER FRIENDLY, 1992

User Friendly completed a Classic treble for trainer Clive Brittain and veteran jockey George Duffield when she ran away with the 1992 renewal. The 7-4 favourite, already a winner of both the English and Irish Oaks, gave Duffield an armchair ride after he settled her in behind the pacemakers. The jockey waited until the two-furlong marker before letting out a couple of inches of rein, and the response was immediate as User Friendly galloped clear to score by three and a half lengths. No filly has won since.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Ex-Saint Lee leaves Palace after Roy's arrival



Sammy Lee

Crystal Palace this weekend announced the departure of assistant manager Sammy Lee following the appointment of Roy Hodgson as the club's new boss.

Ex-Saint Lee was initially named assistant under Sam Allardyce in January before taking up the same role during Frank de Boer's brief tenure at Selhurst Park.

The Dutchman was sacked after just 77 days in charge at Palace and replaced by former England boss Hodgson on Tuesday.

Lee, who has had two spells

working on England's coaching staff, has been replaced by Ray Lewington.

Orlando Trustfull, brought in by De Boer also as an assistant manager, and Ryland Morgans, who was head of performance, have also left the Premier League strugglers.

A statement on the club's website read: "We would like to thank Orlando, Sammy and Ryland for their efforts during their time in south London, and wish them all the very best for the future."

Lee had a short spell playing

for Saints in the early 1990s, and then returned to the club on the coaching side following Ronald Koeman's arrival as manager in the summer of 2014.

Lee left St Mary's following the arrival of Claude Puel two years later.

Palace have moved to beef up their backroom staff with the appointment of former Republic of Ireland midfielder Steven Reid as a first-team coach.

The 36-year-old has worked on the Reading coaching staff for the past two years after joining them

Relieved Howe pays tribute to Jermain

Defoe gives Cherries a first victory

Mark Staniforth

RELIEVED Cherries boss Eddie Howe hailed Jermain Defoe's unrivalled finishing as the striker kick started their season.

Defoe fired Cherries to a 2-1 Premier League win over Brighton to end their four-game losing start to the campaign.

England hitman Defoe bagged his first Cherries goal since a 3-3 draw at Reading in May 2001 - when Howe had featured in central defence.

Defoe has morphed from teenage talent to 34-year-old arch-poacher while Howe has moved into management in the 16 years in between.

But the Cherries boss still finds himself stunned by the striker's eye for goal.

"He's one of the best finishers I've ever seen," said Howe.

"When I was playing with him, I couldn't believe how good he was when we first started to introduce him into the team.

"And he's lost none of that. We've already seen it in training, just how sharp he is in front of goal.

"I'm very relieved by the win, I think that's the overriding emotion.

"It is pure relief. It feels like it's



AFC Bournemouth's Jermain Defoe (left) with Brighton's Shane Duffy.

been longer than four games that we haven't won because, at the beginning of the season, you're just desperate for a win and desperate to hit the ground running and

that hasn't happened."

Defoe's first goal of the campaign sunk Brighton, who had led through Solly March's header.

Ex-Saint Andrew Surman

coolly levelled before Defoe ensured Cherries ended their losing streak in style.

The win eased the pressure on Howe, who has challenged his players to get up to speed on exactly how to tee-up Defoe.

The former Tottenham striker fired 15 league goals for Sunderland last term and Howe firmly believes he can keep on excelling at Premier League level - as long as his players provide the right service.

"We need to get to know as a team what Jermain wants, where he wants the ball," said Howe.

"He's different from every other striker we have. And it's all about us creating more openings for him.

"We haven't created enough chances for him so far this season.

"He thrives on those openings. So our players have to learn the kind of runs he makes, learn what he wants and feed him more."

Brighton boss Chris Hughton was left to lament a late slump that cost his side a second straight Premier League win.

German star Pascal Gross limped off with a potential knee problem which Hughton insisted was genuine.

The former Ingolstadt midfielder was barracked by the home fans for staying down on the turf while the action continued around him.

"I knew we'd be under pressure in the last periods of the game, that's normal away from home," said Hughton. "The two times we didn't defend so well led to their two goals. It's a tough lesson for us.

"The injury for Pascal was genuine. He's not that type of player, to stay down."

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PREMIER LEAGUE



Froome's the obvious BBC award winner



Chris Froome

Paralympic star Dame Sarah Storey believes Chris Froome is the obvious candidate to win the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award for his "staggering" achievements.

Having won a third straight Tour de France in July - his fourth in five years - Froome completed an unprecedented double when he added the Vuelta to his CV.

In doing so, he became the first British rider to win the race and joined French greats Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault as the only men to have won both the French and Spanish 'Grand Tours' in the same season, although they did it before the Vuelta moved from spring to

autumn.

Storey said: "For me, he was already a great with his four Tour wins, three in a row, but to do what he has just done is staggering."

"This kind of dominance - done genuinely - has not been seen for a very long time. To win these races, just a month apart, is the most remarkable thing you can do in cycling."

"I don't think people can imagine how hard something like this is. Your body just becomes so depleted, and your metabolism is racing, it is really difficult to even maintain your weight."

"But he has managed to get over the Tour, carve out some time to recover,

keep training and then go again, at the front of the race, day after day."

That said, Froome's performances have been hugely impressive since 2011 but they have not translated into SPOTY success.

The 32-year-old made the award's shortlist in 2013 and 2015, finishing sixth in the public vote both times, but failed to make the 16-strong list last year, despite winning the Tour, several other races and an Olympic bronze.

Currently the second favourite with bookies behind Anthony Joshua, there is little chance of Froome failing to make the list but pundits believe his feats could be underestimated by the public.

Koeman 'worried' by Toffees form

A "worried" Ronald Koeman will hold a meeting with Everton's squad on where he will urge experienced players such as Wayne Rooney to drag them out of their rut.

The Toffees have lost three games in a row, the most recent of which was Thursday's 3-0 defeat to Atalanta in the Europa League when Koeman publicly put the onus on himself.

Prior to that, they had lost 2-0 at Chelsea and been beaten 3-0 at home by Spurs.

However, the Dutchman acknowledged his comments to the media may not be the ones he relays to his players behind closed doors.

And, ahead of this Sunday's trip to Old Trafford, Koeman has said he is looking for the senior members of his squad, like Rooney, captain Phil Jagielka and Ashley Williams, to turn their fortunes around.

"After that result, of course you have thoughts about the team, individual performances and what we need to change," Koeman revealed.

"I don't like to go out and tell the media what I tell the players."

"I will have a meeting with most of the players and the key players. You can always complain about young talents of 18, 19 years old but it's the time for the experienced players to stand up."

"I'm worried with what I saw on Thursday. I wasn't so worried after Chelsea, it started with the reaction in the second half against Tottenham - that 45 minutes and the first 45 minutes on Thursday. There are enough reasons to be worried."

Rooney will make his first return to Old Trafford since leaving



Ronald Koeman

this weekend.

The 31-year-old, United's all-time record scorer, is one of those Koeman is looking for to get them back on track.

"Everybody knows about his qualities, what he did for Manchester United," he added.

"(But) he's an Everton player,

he's one of the players who needs to react and to bring the level that we expect from players like Wayne."

Koeman is confident the tide will turn. It was almost at this point of last season when Everton embarked on a run of just one win in 11 games while Koeman

experienced a similarly lean spell with Saints the season before.

"I have the experience - we had a bad run last season, I had a bad run with Southampton, we came out of those," he stressed.

"I have to believe I have the confidence that we can come out of this."

Controversy rumbles on

It's just over a month since England striker Eniola Aluko's allegations about her treatment by manager Mark Sampson were first made public.

The issue shows little sign of being resolved, with Sampson maintaining his innocence amid calls for a fresh investigation.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at the timeline of events.

August 7: The Daily Mail reveals that Aluko made allegations of bullying and harassment against Sampson and his staff in May 2016. A Football Association investigation concluded in March 2017 cleared Sampson and his staff of wrongdoing but Aluko was paid a settlement in a confidentiality agreement, which the FA insisted was to avoid disruption to England's Euro 2017 campaign.

August 16: Details of an allegation made by Aluko emerge claiming Sampson made a remark towards another player with "racial and prejudicial connotations". Sampson is alleged to have made reference to the number of times a player had been arrested.

August 17: As pressure grows for more details to be made public, the Football Association releases a statement from Sampson saying



Mark Sampson

he welcomed the investigation and would be looking to improve his communication skills.

August 21: Aluko speaks publicly on the matter for the first time and alleges Sampson made a racist comment to her ahead of an England game. After telling Sampson she had relatives coming from Nigeria to watch the game, Aluko claims Sampson replied: "Well make sure they don't come over with Ebola."

August 22: The Professional Footballers' Association backs calls for a new investigation into how Aluko's complaints were handled.

September 5: Sampson speaks publicly for the first time about the allegations and says his conscience is clear.

September 11: Damian Collins, chair of the parliamentary culture, media and sport select committee, tells the Guardian the committee is very concerned about the matter and will summon senior executives from the FA to answer questions.

September 12: Sampson appears to contradict evidence he gave to the inquiry when he tells a press conference he cannot recall ever having a conversation about Ebola with Aluko.

Reed record is taken away by Frank

Frank de Boer was sacked by Crystal Palace after just four league games in charge, the fewest ever for a Premier League manager.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at the shortest previous reigns at Premier League clubs.

LES REED

Eight games (in all competitions), Charlton, 2006

Taking over with the club struggling after eight defeats in their first 12 league games, Reed failed to improve matters. He picked up just four points in seven games, suffered a League Cup exit against Wycombe and was sacked on Christmas Eve. He has been at Saints since 2010 and plays a major role in signing players and managerial appointments.

BOB BRADLEY

11 games, Swansea, 2016

The first American to manage in the Premier League, Bradley lasted only



Les Reed.

from October to December last year - though unlike Reed, he at least made it through Christmas before being axed on December 27. He took eight points from 11 games and left Swansea 19th in the table, having also struggled under Francesco Guidolin, but they finally found their man as Paul Clement secured top-flight survival.

TERRY CONNOR

13 games, Wolves, 2012

Mick McCarthy's successor was hardly the experienced name Wolves fans had been promised, with his erstwhile assistant never having managed professionally. Four points from 13 games, and Wolves' relegation, meant he would go back to being McCarthy's assistant at Ipswich.

JACQUES SANTINI

13 games, Tottenham, 2004

The Frenchman's only wins came against Newcastle, Birmingham, Everton and in League Cup ties against Oldham and Bolton, the latter after extra-time.

Continued on facing page

PREMIER LEAGUE



Frankly, it's just

Simon Carter



HOW times change.

In 1992/93, the inaugural Premier League season, there was only one managerial casualty in the top flight.

That dubious 'honour' fell to Ian Porterfield, who was sacked as Chelsea boss in February. No one else was sacked, no-one else resigned.

As the Blues stayed up that term, that meant none of the three relegated clubs parted company with their manager.

Almost unthinkable now.

The following season, 1993/94, chairmen were a little bit more nervous.

Peter Reid was sacked as Manchester City boss just a few weeks into the season - though he had been in charge for almost three years - while December brought three resignations.

Bobby Gould and Howard Kendall quit Coventry and Everton respectively, while Mike Walker walked out on Norwich to take over at Goodison Park.

One month later, in January 1994, Ian Branfoot became the first Saints manager to be sacked in the Premier League era.

A few days later, the axe fell on Graeme Souness at Anfield.

At least Branfoot was given until January.

He had started the season by losing six of his first seven league games. And the only match Saints won was against Swindon, who arrived at The Dell in late August having just lost 5-0 at home to Liverpool - and promptly conceded five more.

Lose six of your first seven games in the Premier League these days, and those days could be numbered.

If your name is Frank de Boer, lose your first four, fail to score a single goal, and your days ARE numbered.

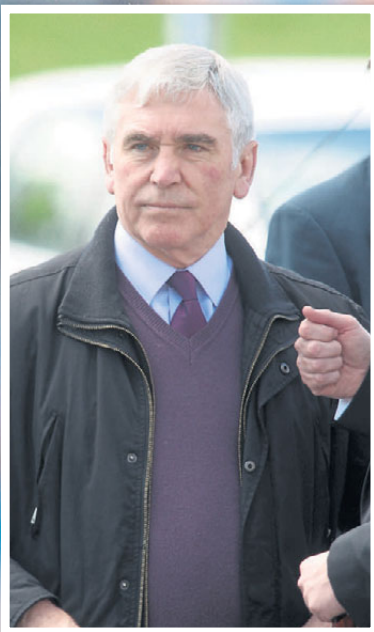
Saints boss Dave Jones started the 1998/99 PL season by picking up one point from a possible 27.

I have no idea whether there was any discussions to sack him during that spell, but in the end he guided Saints to safety. Ok, it was the season which became known as the 'Great Escape' but he still kept the club up - despite a truly woeful start.

Perhaps de Boer could have kept Palace up. After all, there were still 34 games left when he was given the proverbial boot.

Perhaps, though, he wouldn't have. Anyway, it's all hypothetical because the Dutchman was sacked - after just 77 days in charge at Selhurst Park.

de Boer pays the price for lack of patience in the Premier League



It was a dismissal that, for many, sums up the state of the Premier League in the year 2017.

A quarter of a century on from its inception - with greed very much at the heart of the rebranding - this is what we have ended up with ...

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spend hundreds of millions every summer, and the rest are frightened to death of relegation. And if you're frightened, you panic.

They are frightened to death of missing out on their portion of Rupert Murdoch's cash cow.

And no wonder, for the sums are eye-watering.

When Saints went down from the top flight - only 12 years ago, lest we forget - the club received £13m in parachute payments. Two cheques of £6.5m each, that was the club's sum total.

I repeat, times have changed.

When Aston Villa went down in 2015/16, they received £40m in

PREMIER LEAGUE



a sorry state ...



Frank de Boer, right, was sacked after just four league games this week. Chris Todd, left, was axed by Eastleigh after the same amount of games in 2016/17. Far left - Ian Branfoot became the third boss sacked in the Premier League when he left Saints in January 1994.

their first Championship season and another £33m this season. A further £14m will follow in 2018/19 if they haven't won promotion to the Premier League by then.

That's £87m in parachute payments, which sounds a lot. Well, it IS a lot - but a lot less than the

£300m (roughly) they will miss out on by not being part of the Premier League.

That is why it is easy to panic. That is why Crystal Palace chairman Steve Parish was quick to axe a man he had only appointed less than 80 days earlier.

Parish panicked, and de Boer

was history.

Parish, of course, is not alone in panicking.

Frank de Boer wasn't the first managerial casualty in the top five English divisions in 2017/18.

He was the third.

Down in Devon, Torquay United's Kevin Nicholson was sacked

after just four games of the new National League season.

The Gulls had drawn 0-0 with Tranmere on the opening day and then lost their next three matches.

At Northampton, Justin Edinburgh then lost his job after just four games - and no points - of the League 1 season.

Successive 4-1 beatings were the straws that broke the camel's back, and led to the Cobblers appointing Jimmy Floyd Haselbaink as his replacement this week.

One of the men instantly linked with following Nicholson at Plainmoor was former Torquay skipper Chris Todd.

The irony wouldn't have been lost on him, given that last season HE was the first manager in the top five divisions to be sacked.

Eastleigh owner Stewart Donald had allowed Todd to sign virtually a whole new team in the summer of 2016.

In that respect, with regards to new signings, Todd was firmly backed by his chairman.

Then, four games into the new season, he was sacked.

Of those four matches, Todd won one and only lost at Tranmere - one of the favourites for promotion - to a last minute goal. Hardly a start of de Boer-esque proportions.

That was the second season running that Donald had made a change in August. Twelve months earlier, Richard Hill had also left - and a home defeat by Dover was his final match as well.

In both of those seasons Eastleigh failed to make the play-offs which, given Donald's ambition and the amount of money he has spent at the Silverlake, cannot have pleased the owner.

Sometimes a change so early is for the best, and sometimes it's not.

Continuity is sometimes held up as the key to a successful club. But Chelsea have had more managers than most in recent times, and they have still hoovered up titles, cups and were once the kings of Europe.

Saints haven't done too badly either, given the amount of managers they have gone through since the turn of the century. Three managers were sacked (Pardew, Adkins and Puel), two more walked out (Pochettino and Koeman) and STILL the club have come from League 1 to four successive top 8 Premier League finishes in what at times appears to be the blink of an eye.

Of course, it is too early to say whether Parish's panic attack will work in Palace's favour.

All we do know is that it's a sorry tale which, I repeat, sums up a league which is far too wealthy for its own good.

Sturrock's unlucky 13

from facing page

His resignation was put down to "personal reasons", widely reported to involve disagreements with Spurs' then sporting director Frank Arnesen.

PAUL STURROCK

13 games, Saints, 2004

The Scot won four of his first six games in charge, opening up with a 2-0 success against Liverpool, though defeat to rivals Portsmouth would not have helped his case and a five-match winless run to close the 2003-04 season left Saints in 12th place.

He left two games into the following season, despite a 3-2 win over Blackburn in the second of those matches. Widely believed to have been sacked, the move was dressed up as 'by mutual consent.'

However, League Managers' Association vice-chairman Frank Clark still described the decision as "ludicrous".

CHRIS HUTCHINGS

13 games, Wigan, 2007



Paul Sturrock

Hutchings stepped up having been assistant to Paul Jewell but early wins over Middlesbrough and Sunderland proved a false dawn, with only two further points and a League Cup exit to Hull to show for his reign.

PAOLO DI CANIO

13 games, Sunderland, 2013

The Italian's abrasive style provided the shock therapy to keep the Black Cats in the Premier League in the 2012-13 season, aided by a 3-0 derby win over Newcastle memorable for Di Canio knee-sliding down the St James' Park sidelines in celebration. He quickly wore out his welcome the following season, though, and was sacked before September was out.

SAMMY LEE

14 games, Bolton, 2007

"Little Sam" was handed the task of replacing "Big Sam" Allardyce, having previously been his assistant. He won only one of 11 league games, against Reading, with his only other success coming against Macedonian side Rabotnicki in the UEFA Cup.

Anderson is top of the ICC Test list

JAMES Anderson has leapt to the top of the ICC Test bowling rankings after his career best 7-42 in England's third Test success against the West Indies at Lord's last weekend.

Team-mate Joe Root is second in the Test batting list, behind Australian Steve Smith.

Test batting

1 Steve Smith (Aus)	936
2 Joe Root (Eng)...	889
3 Kane Williamson (NZ)	880
4 Cheteshwar Pujara (Ind)	876
5 David Warner (Aus)	807
6 Virat Kohli (Ind)	806
7 Azhar Ali (Pak) ..	769
8 Hashim Amla (SA)	764
9 Lokesh Rahul (Ind)	761
10 Ajinkya Rahane (Ind)	760
11 Alastair Cook (Eng)	738
12 Quinton de Kock (SA)	729
13 Jonny Bairstow (Eng)	710
14 Ross Taylor (NZ)	705
15 Tamim Iqbal (Ban)	679
16 Dean Elgar (SA)	674
17 Kraigg Brathwaite (WI)	669
18 Francois du Plessis (SA)	668
19 Shakib Al Hasan (Ban)	668
20 Ben Stokes (Eng)	664

Test bowling

1 James Anderson (Eng)	896
2 Ravindra Jadeja (Ind)	884
3 Ravichandran Ashwin (Ind)	852
4 Rangana Herath (Aus)	794



James Anderson

6 Kagiso Rabada (SA)	785
7 Dale Steyn (SA)	763
8 Nathan Lyon (Aus)	752
9 Vernon Philander (SA)	751
10 Neil Wagner (NZ)	745
11 Stuart Broad (Eng)	737
12 Trent Boult (NZ)	732
13 Mitchell Starc (Aus)	727
14 Morne Morkel (SA)	713
15 Yasir Shah (Pak)	698
16 Tim Southee (NZ)	687
17 Shakib Al Hasan (Ban)	682
18 Mohammad Shami (Ind)	618
19 Moeen Ali (Eng)	608
20 Shannon Gabriel (WI)	603

ODI batting

1 Virat Kohli (Ind)	887
2 David Warner (Aus)	861
3 AB de Villiers (SA)	847
4 Joe Root (ENG)	799
5 Babar Azam (PAK)	786
6 Kane Williamson (NZ)	779
7 Quinton de Kock (SA)	769
8 Francois du Plessis (SA)	768
9 Rohit Sharma (Ind)	764
10 Martin Guptill (NZ)	749

ODI Bowling

1 Josh Hazlewood (Aus)	732
2 Imran Tahir (SA)	718
3 Mitchell Starc (Aus)	701
4 Jasprit Bumrah (Ind)	687
5 Kagiso Rabada (SA)	685
6 Trent Boult (NZ)	665
7 Hasan Ali (Pak)	663
8 Sunil Narine (WI)	662
9 Rashid Khan (Afg)	647
10 Akshar Patel (Ind)	645

PINK

Pimples, carp and an unlucky moose!

Simon
Carter



Marco Asensio missed Real Madrid's Champions League opener on Wednesday night due to an infection caused by shaving his legs.

Zinedine Zidane told reporters ahead of Real's 3-0 victory over APOEL Nicosia that the 21-year-old would not feature in the game because of a pimple which prevented him from pulling his sock up.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at other sportsmen who have suffered unusual injuries.

QUINTON DE KOCK

South Africa were forced to make a late SOS the night before their third Test against England in January 2016 after wicket-keeper Quinton de Kock slipped and twisted his knee while walking his dog. The injury worsened overnight, prompting a late call-up for Dane Vilas, and while De Kock might want to forget the nature of the injury, South Africa will also want to forget the result after losing by seven wickets, which handed England the series.

RORY McILROY

In unusual circumstances, Rory McIlroy suffered a "total rupture" of his left ankle nine days before the 2015 Open Championship at St Andrews, forcing him to withdraw. The defending champion posted a picture of himself, via his Instagram account, wearing a protective boot on his left leg after, in his own words, "a soccer kickabout with friends on Saturday".

GLENN McGRATH

Perhaps the most memorable of all, Australia paceman McGrath turned his ankle ahead of the second Ashes Test in 2005 when he stepped on a stray cricket ball during a warm-up game of touch rugby. He missed the Test which England won in thrilling fashion to level the series at 1-1. They would go on to take the series 2-1, winning again at Trent Bridge - another match McGrath missed through injury.

WAYNE ROONEY



Wayne Rooney suffered an unusual injury in 2015.

The then England and Manchester United captain Wayne Rooney caused controversy in 2015 when a video emerged of him boxing with former team-mate Phil Bardsley in his kitchen. A blow from Bardsley floored Rooney who fell backwards onto the floor and, after the video was aired, Rooney celebrated a goal against Tottenham by shadow boxing and then pretending to hit the deck. "I was in a house with some friends. Obviously I was caught on the wrong end of a punch, but I wasn't knocked out like it was reported," Rooney said.

SVEIN GRONDALEN

Norway defender Svein Gron dalen probably saw nothing wrong when he put on his running shoes and stepped out for a

training run. However, while out jogging he collided with a moose and was forced to withdraw from an international as a result.

JOBA CHAMBERLAIN

Detroit Tigers pitcher Joba Chamberlain knows McIlroy's pain, having suffered an ankle injury of his own. Back in 2012, when on the books of the New York Yankees, he embarked on some trampolining with his son but came down awkwardly and sidelined himself.

DAVID JAMES

Former England goalkeeper David James was never afraid of standing out from the crowd, but he brought himself unwanted headlines when he injured his shoulder while out fishing, caus-

ing himself pain when he tried to land a monster carp. Some of James' injuries were not caused by other sports, though, for he once pulled a muscle in his back when reaching for the television remote control.

JAMIE DONALDSON

Ryder Cup star Jamie Donaldson suffered a severe finger injury following a mishap with a chainsaw in January 2016. The Welshman, who claimed the decisive point as Europe defeated the United States in September 2014, posted a graphic photo on Twitter of what seemed to be a laceration to the little finger on his left hand. Above the image, he wrote: "So folks in my time off decided to have a fight with a chainsaw and lost! Oops!! C u in Dubai."

PINK

Paris & LA: What can we expect?

Mark
Staniforth

PARIS will stage the 2024 Olympic Games and Los Angeles will put on the 2028 edition, it was announced this week.

The two cities and the International Olympic Committee have described the unprecedented decision to award two Games at once as a win-win-win, as it gave all parties what they most wanted.

Here, the Sports Pink explains the differences in approach the two cities have taken.

THE CONCEPT

Paris' pitch played heavily on the city's beauty and history. Its key message was "Paris as an Olympic Park", promising a "compact" Games to give athletes and fans a sense of being at the centre of something magical.

Los Angeles' unique selling point was its host of world-class venues and the commercial success of its last Games in 1984, while making a big play on California's prowess in the entertainment and technology sectors.

VENUES

Most of the sports at Paris 2024 will be played in two clusters of venues: the Paris Centre Zone and the Grand Paris Zone, which is just to the north. The centrepiece of the latter is the 75,000-seat Stade de France, which will host the ceremonies and athletics. Roland Garros is the most famous venue in the centre zone, while there will be open water swimming, triathlon and surfing in the Seine.

Los Angeles 2028 will, for the most part, be staged in upgraded venues from 1984, the plush new homes of the city's professional teams and the excellent facilities provided by the city's universities.

TO-DO LIST

Paris has one major project to tackle and that is the athletes' village at L'Île-Saint-Denis in the city's northern suburbs. With an estimated cost of £1.5billion, this is not a trifling matter and the claim that the land would not be available in 2028 was a key factor in Paris winning the argument that it should go first.

LA's organising committee, on the other hand, has nothing to build as things stand, although 11



Paris and Los Angeles will host the 2024 and 2028 Olympics.

years is a long time and there is every chance that new sports will be added, old ones dropped and upgrades required.

ORGANISING COMMITTEES

As successful bidding teams usually morph into organising committees, we can assume many of the faces behind the bids will stay on. For Paris, the co-chairmen were three-time Olympic canoeing champion Tony Estanguet and ex-World Rugby chairman Bernard Lapasset. Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo provides multi-lingual political support.

LA's bid was fronted by multi-millionaire sports agent Casey

Wasserman and LA mayor Eric Garcetti, with a who's who list of Californian business and sports aristocracy behind them. Athletics star Michael Johnson and swimming great Janet Evans were also prominent during the campaign.

BUDGET

If we have learned one thing from Olympic history it is that the price quoted will not be the final bill. Paris has suggested its total infrastructure costs will be £2.7billion, with operational costs closer to £3billion. LA believes it can do it all for about £4billion, although waiting an extra four years will bring more costs.

SECURITY

Another huge variable - it is almost impossible to predict what will be happening in 2024, let alone 2028. Security looked like being one of Paris' weaknesses, as the city and France has suffered so much at the hands of terrorists. The successful security operation at last year's European Championship football tournament eased IOC concerns.

LA has not experienced anything like the terrorism threats that Paris has had to deal with but is hardly unaccustomed to violence. The problem for LA will be numbers, as its police force is small for a city of its size.

Book review

*True Professional
The Clive Sullivan Story*
By James Oddy

Sportsbookofthethemonth.com
price: £18.99

True Professional opens at the Stade de Gerland, in Lyon, France, a venue author James Oddy calls "not the most obvious choice for the Rugby League World Cup Final."

The 1972 final saw Great Britain go head-to-head with perennial rivals Australia, captained by Graeme Langland, while GB were led by Clive 'Sully' Sullivan, the very first black Briton to captain a British sports team. The BBC were present, represented by the incomparable Eddie Waring, but only diehard rugby league fans made the journey to central France and for most of the match, the players' shouts were as audible as those of the paltry 4,000 crowd.

Great Britain equalised with seven minutes of normal time remaining, ensuring the duel went into extra time. Incredibly, however, there was no further score and the contest ended 10-10 which meant that GB, thanks to their perfect pre-final record, were crowned world champions.

World Cup victories, especially on foreign soil, are a rarity, yet as Oddy points out, upon their return to Blighty, "The squad was not met with scores of press



members clamouring for interviews, or requests for endorsements and sponsorships."

This, he claims, is because even today, rugby league is "only given national attention begrudgingly," an accurate reflection, though the author later offers several reasons why Sullivan and his men may not have received due credit for their victory.

Clive Sullivan was born in Splott, a respectable working class area of Cardiff, similar in demographic make-up to that of many northern towns and cities where he would eventually make his living, not as though the 13-man version of rugby was readily embraced deep in the heart of 15-man territory.

Oddy weaves an engaging history of rugby league with that of Clive Sullivan's remarkable sporting career, dovetailing these two strands of his tale with biography and interviews. He is right to suggest that "Sullivan's career is a microcosm of rugby league."

Clive Sullivan's playing record (he represented both Hull teams over the course of 20 years and scored more than 300 tries) more than justifies this enjoyable mix of biography and social observation. He died, aged just 42, in 1985, a sporting great who never received anywhere near the level of recognition he deserved.

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HANTS CRICKET



HANTS FIXTURES 2017

APRIL

2-4 Cardiff MCCU (h) FR
Hants 289 (Carberry 100) & 271-6d
(Vince 90) drew with Cardiff 98 & 110-2.

7-10 Yorkshire (a) CC1
Yorkshire 273 & 187 (Abbott 7-41),
Hants 141 & 321-6 (Adams 72).
Hants won by 4 wickets

14-17 Middlesex (h) CC1
Middlesex 456 (Wheal 4-98) & 278-9
(Abbott 5-59), Hants 438 (Rossouw
99, Carberry 98). Drawn.

21-24 Yorkshire (h) CC1
Hants 455 (Vince 147, Berg 99no),
Yorkshire 231 (Berg 4-62) & 399-6
(Abbott 3-65). Drawn

27 Kent (a) 50L
Kent 258, Hants 260-4 (Alsop
112no). Hants won by 6 wickets.

30 Essex (a) 50L
Essex 304-7, Hants 279 (Vince 68,
Bailey 63). Hants lost by 25 runs.

MAY
3 Middlesex (h) 50L
Middlesex 295 (Gubbins 114, Topley
4-68) beat Hants 146-7 (Bailey
52no) by 89 runs (D/L)

7 Gloucestershire (h) 50L
Hants 239-3 (Vince 89*) beat Gloucestershire
237 (Dawson 3-30) by 7 wickets

10 Somerset (a) 50L
Hants 250-6 (Rossouw 156) beat
Somerset 249 (Berg 3-44) by 4
wickets

12 Glamorgan (h) 50L
Hants 332-6 (Vince 178) lost to
Glamorgan 334-7 (Crane 3-69) by
3 wickets

14 Surrey (a) 50L
Hants 271-8 (Bailey 145no) lost to
Surrey 238-2 by 66 runs (D/L)

17 Sussex (h) 50L
Match abandoned

19-22 Essex (a) CC1
Essex 360 (K Abbott 5-58) beat
Hants 115 & 148 by an innings and
97 runs.

26-29 Somerset (a) CC1
Hants 162 & 293 (Carberry 51) beat
Somerset 197 & 168 (Crane 5-40)
by 90 runs

JUNE

2-5 Warwickshire (h) CC1
Hants 515 (Adams 166, Ervine
203) beat Warwickshire 254 & 167
(Abbott 4-32) by an innings and
94 runs

8-11 South Africa A (h) Fr
South Africa A 370-7d & 185-1d
beat Hampshire 185 & 119 by 251
runs.

19-22 Lancashire (a) CC1
Hants 395 (Bailey 127, Abbott 97no)
& 168 (Berg 49) lost to Lancashire
593 (Berg 4-111) by an innings and
30 runs

26-29 Somerset (h) CC1
Hants 211-9d (Dawson 53) & 96-5d
drew with Somerset 147 (Berg 4-28,
Holland 4-16) & 88-8 (Berg 3-17).

JULY

3-6 Surrey (a) CC1
Hants 648-7d (Bailey 161, Adams
144, Vince 104, Ervine 83, Holland
53no), Surrey 483 (Holland 3-37) &
166-3. Draw

7 Glamorgan (a) T20
Hampshire 167-5 (McManus 59),
Glamorgan 145-9 (Afridi 4-20,
Topley 3-23). Won by 22 runs

12 Sussex (a) T20
Hampshire 188-3 (Vince 81, Ros-
souw 44, Carberry 41), Sussex 169-7
(Abbott 3-22). Won by 19 runs

14 Middlesex (h) T20
Hampshire 189-8 (Carberry 77),
Middlesex 160-7 (Crane 3-17). Won
by 29 runs

20 Sussex (h) T20
Hampshire 126-9 (T Alsop 64), Sus-
sex 127-4. Lost by 6 wickets

21 Essex (a) T20
Hampshire 124-9 (Carberry 30), Es-
sex 129-3. Lost by 7 wickets

23 Surrey (h) T20
Match abandoned

26 Somerset (a) T20
Somerset 204-9, Hampshire 190 (L
McManus 34). Lost by 14 runs

28 Gloucestershire (a) T20
Gloucestershire 174-5, Hampshire
121-3. Won on D/L Method.

AUGUST

1 Kent (h) T20
Kent 159-6 (S Afridi 4-26), Hamp-
shire 154-4 (T Alsop 43, G Bailey 41).
Lost by 5 runs.

3 Middlesex (a) T20
Middlesex 136 (K Abbott 3-26),
Hampshire 137-4 (R Rossouw 60).
Won by 6 wickets.

4 Essex (h) T20
Hampshire 168-6 (G Bailey 89no),
Essex 169-6 (L Dawson 3-41). Lost
by 4 wickets.

6-9 Lancashire (h) CC1
Lancashire 149 (M Crane 3-27) &
314-5, Hampshire 224 (L Dawson
75). Drawn.

10 Glamorgan (h) T20
Glamorgan 118-6 (M Crane 3-21),
Hampshire 119-2 (J Vince 60no).
Won by 8 wickets.

11 Kent (a) T20
Kent 167-7, Hampshire 171-4 (J
Vince 55, C Dickinson 51). Won by
6 wickets.

18 Somerset (h) T20
Somerset 189-3, Hampshire 91. Lost
by 98 runs.

22 Derbyshire (A) T20 QF
Hampshire 249-8 (S Afridi 101, J
Vince 55), Derbyshire 148 (K Abbott
3-25, L Dawson 3-28). Won by 101
runs.

SEPTEMBER

2 Notts (T20 SF)
Notts 169-7, Hampshire 146 (J Vince
56). Hants lost by 23 runs.

5-8 Surrey (h) CC1
Surrey 200 (L Dawson 4-22) &
280-4, Hampshire 280 (G Berg 80, G
Bailey 51, I Holland 51). Drawn

12-15 Middlesex (a) CC1
Middlesex 204 (F Edwards 5-79, K
Abbott 3-25) & 14-1, Hampshire
146. Drawn

19-22 Essex (h) CC1
25-28 Warwickshire (a) CC1
Key
CC1 - County Championship division
one, 50L - Royal London One-Day
Cup, T20 - Natwest T20 Blast

Two phone calls that put smiles on Felix's face

Mike
Vimpany



Two telephone calls in a matter of days this week put a warm smile on Felix Organ's face.

The first came from the ECB telling him about autumn England Under-19 training camps at Loughborough in advance of the ICC Youth World Cup in New Zealand.

The second from Hampshire's Head of Player Development, Charlie Freeston sent him racing hot foot from the Ageas Bowl to Uxbridge to make his County Championship debut!

It was all rather bizarre," Organ chuckled.

"On Tuesday evening, I'd just completed a century for Hampshire seconds against Glamorgan on the Nursery Ground.

"When the team pitched up the next morning, the ground had been saturated by overnight rain, so we went off to play a round of golf.

"Next thing I know, Charlie's on the phone telling me to pack my bags and head off to Uxbridge because James Vince had tweaked a hamstring in the warm-up and I was playing.

"Fortunately, I'd only just got myself registered a few days earlier."

Organ wasted little time and, with would-be 12th man Billy Mead in the passenger's seat, drove to a soggy Uxbridge to make a somehow hurried Hampshire debut.

"They were 20 overs into the game by the game we got to the ground, but I did manage to get on to the field and stop the ball a few times before rain stopped play.

Frustrating

"Thursday was frustrating with all the delays, but I did manage to get a knock and spent best part of an hour at the crease in very testing batting conditions, hitting a couple of fours in my 16.

"It was a real eye opener playing against the likes of Stephen Finn and one I'll relish doing again."

Organ would love to be involved again in Hampshire's final two games against newly crowned county champions Essex and Warwickshire.

But involvement in the training camps at Loughborough suggests he's very much in the frame for a



Felix Organ celebrates a century for the Hampshire Academy and, below, receives his England U19 cap from Darren Gough.



place in England's Under-19 World Cup squad. "There's a probable tour to South Africa in the New Year, so

I'll want to be on that and bed down a place for the World Cup in February," he added.

CONTACT ECHO SPORT ON 02380 424515

HANTS CRICKET

'This is like winning a World Cup'

David Clough

Jubilant Essex captain Ryan ten Doeschate said his side's remarkable County Championship success felt like winning the World Cup.

Essex returned home to their Chelmsford ground on Friday afternoon to celebrate securing their first title since 1992.

They put themselves on the brink of glory by thrashing Warwickshire inside three days, and then watched second-placed Lancashire lose at Somerset on the coach back from Edgbaston.

Essex therefore completed their task with two matches to spare - an amazing achievement in their first season back in the top flight following promotion last summer.

Ten Doeschate said: "I'm not sure it's sunk in.

"But seeing all the staff shows what it means to the organisation as a whole. It will probably take a few days to appreciate the scale of what we have achieved.

"without a doubt it's the proudest moment of my career. All the years of struggle, all the years of being near-beats, this makes up for it.

"If you look back over the history of the championship and the yo-yo effect of teams coming up and going straight back down - and we are a small club with limited resources - I know what it means to me and everyone at the club.

"For us it feels like the World Cup. We won't have a better feeling than this."



Ryan ten Doeschate

Essex's previous six titles came between 1979 and 1992, propelled by England stars such as Graham Gooch, Nasser Hussain and Derek Pringle.

The glory days have finally returned under Ten Doeschate and coach Chris Silverwood, the former England bowler who has delivered back-to-back title-winning seasons in Division Two and then Division One.

"The aim at the start of the season was to make our presence felt in Division One," said Silverwood.

"We view every game as must win and try to do that all the time.

"It's been a team effort. They all love to see each other do well. The number of times we have bowled a side out in a session you can see that energy on the field.

"If you can harness that then the sky's the limit for these guys."

Silverwood's success has seen him linked with a role as England bowling coach, and the 42-year-old is travelling to Bristol next week to, in his own words, "help out" ahead of the third one-day international against West Indies.

But he added: "I'm not really going to talk about that. Today is all about Essex and the success we've had. We'll worry about that later."

Essex will have England's Alistair Cook available for their penultimate game - a trip to The Ageas Bowl to face Hampshire, starting next Tuesday.



Alistair Cook

CRICKET STATISTICS

CHAMPIONSHIP MOST RUNS

	Inn	Rns	HS	Av
K Sangakkara (Sy)	12	1250	200	113.63
D Mitchell (Wo)	24	1138	161	51.72
MJ Cosgrove (Le)	21	1031	188	49.09
JL Denly (Kent)	21	1013	227	53.31
S Northeast (Kent)	21	1011	173*	56.16
P Collingwood (Du)	20	1011	177	56.16
LWP Wells (Sx)	18	963	258	60.18
MD Stoneman (Sy)	15	959	197	63.93
RJ Burns (Sy)	18	922	219*	54.23
IJL Trott (Wk)	22	887	175	40.31
S van Zyl (Sx)	20	886	166*	46.63
GS Ballance (Yor)	14	884	203*	88.40
BL D'Oliveira (Wo)	23	865	150	37.60
CDJ Dent (Gs)	21	858	135*	47.66
JM Clarke (Wo)	24	850	142	44.73
SR Patel (Nt)	16	847	257*	60.50
NLI Browne (Es)	18	816	221	45.33
AL Davies (La)	20	812	140*	42.73
CT Steel (Dur)	20	806	224	44.77
BA Godleman (Dy)	22	799	156*	39.95
MH Wessels (Nt)	15	799	202*	57.07
BM Duckett (Nr)	18	797	193	44.27
RI Newton (Nr)	20	782	108	39.10
SR Dickson (Kent)	19	775	318	40.78
SS Eskinazi (Mx)	21	767	179	40.36
S Chanderpaul (La)	15	751	182	57.76
SD Robson (Mx)	16	709	159	44.31
LS Livingstone (La)	15	702	224	50.14
EJH Eckersley (Le)	24	692	158	31.45

MOST WICKETS

	Rns	Wkts	BB	Av
JA Porter (Es)	1143	64	7-55	17.85
SR Harmer (Es)	1272	63	9-95	20.19
J Leach (Wo)	1276	63	5-32	20.25
LC Norwell (Gs)	994	58	8-43	17.13
JC Archer (Sx)	1414	58	7-67	24.37
DI Stevens (Kent)	1026	57	8-75	18.00
KJ Abbott (Ham)	934	48	7-41	19.45
J Tongue (Wo)	1129	45	6-97	25.08
BO Coad (Yor)	829	43	6-25	19.27
EG Barnard (Wk)	1120	43	4-23	26.04
C Overton (Sm)	902	42	5-47	21.47
MJ Leach (Sm)	1137	42	6-78	27.07
R McLaren (La)	965	40	4-37	24.12
C Rushworth (Dur)	1037	40	5-52	25.92
MG Hogan (Gm)	911	38	5-38	23.97
R Kleinveldt (Nr)	1051	37	5-50	28.40
JL Fletcher (Nt)	808	36	4-35	22.44
NL Buck (Nr)	677	33	6-34	20.51
JL Pattinson (Nt)	386	32	5-29	12.06
MD Bess (Sx)	669	32	7-117	20.90
M de Lange (Gm)	1199	32	5-95	37.46
MT Coles (Kent)	1313	32	6-84	41.03
Azharullah (Nr)	677	31	5-63	21.83
B Sanderson (Nr)	691	31	5-52	22.29
GK Berg (Ham)	859	31	4-28	27.70
LJ Carey (Gm)	957	31	4-85	30.87
R Gleeson (Nr)	585	30	5-46	19.50
BA Hutton (Nr)	733	30	5-52	24.43
J Harris (Kent,Mx)	774	30	4-56	25.80
TJ Murtagh (Mx)	908	30	6-63	28.60
B Mendis (Dy)	858	30	6-204	30.26

HAMPSHIRE BATTING

	Inn	Rns	HS	Av
KJ Abbott	14	391	97*	35.54
JP Adams	13	550	166	42.30
TH Alsop	3	49	40	16.33
GJ Bailey	12	466	161	38.83
GK Berg	16	503	99*	35.92
MA Carberry	11	272	98	24.72
MS Crane	7	61	29	12.20
LA Dawson	12	304	75	25.33
CM Dickinson	1	1	1	1.00
FH Edwards	7	32	20	8.00
SM Ervine	17	514	203	32.12
IG Holland	7	184	58*	36.80
LD McManus	14	285	41*	23.75
FS Organ	1	16	16	16.00
RR Rossouw	13	253	99	19.46
MET Salisbury	3	31	17*	15.50
BJ Taylor	2	35	18	35.00
RJW Topley	3	23	16	23.00
JM Vince	15	524	147	34.93
JJ Weatherley	2	36	35	18.00
BTJ Wheel	4	31	18	10.33

HAMPSHIRE BOWLING

	Rns	Wkt	BB	Av
KJ Abbott	934	48	7-41	19.45
GK Berg	859	31	4-28	27.70
MS Crane	663	16	5-40	41.43
LA Dawson	701	27	4-22	25.96
FH Edwards	572	18	5-79	31.77
SM Ervine	331	6	2-1	55.16
IG Holland	233	15	4-16	15.53
MET Salisbury	177	4	2-35	44.25
BJ Taylor	180	2	2-180	90.00
RJW Topley	178	2	1-56	89.00

JM Vince	38	1	1-13	38.00
JJ Weatherley	46	1	1-46	46.00
BTJ Wheel	352	11	4-98	32.00

DOUBLE CENTURIES, CHAMPIONSHIP 2017

318 SR Dickson, Kent v Northamptonshire, Beckenham
258 LWP Wells Sussex v Durham, Hove
257* SR Patel, Nottinghamshire v Gloucestershire, Bristol
247 SR Patel, Nottinghamshire v Leicestershire, Trent Bridge
244 DJ Vilas, Lancashire v Hampshire, Old Trafford
227 JL Denly, Kent v Worcestershire, New Road
224 CT Steel, Durham v Leicestershire, Grace Road
224 LS Livingstone, Lancashire v Warwickshire, Old Trafford
221 NLI Browne, Essex v Middlesex, Chelmsford
219* RJ Burns, Surrey v Hampshire, Oval
218 AD Hales, Nottinghamshire v Derbyshire, Derby
206* CT Bancroft, Gloucestershire v Kent, Bristol
203* GS Ballance, Yorkshire v Hampshire, The Ageas Bowl
203 SM Ervine, Hampshire v Warwickshire, The Ageas Bowl
202* MH Wessels, Nottinghamshire v Sussex, Trent Bridge
200 KC Sangakkara, Surrey v Essex, Chelmsford

SEVEN WICKETS OR MORE IN AN INNINGS

9-95 SR Harmer, Essex v Middlesex, Chelmsford
8-36 SR Harmer, Essex v Warwickshire, Chelmsford
8-43 LC Norwell, Gloucestershire v Leicestershire, Grace Road
8-75 DI Stevens, Kent v Leicestershire, Canterbury
8-148 CF Parkinson, Leicestershire v Worcestershire, New Road
7-41 KJ Abbott, Hampshire v Yorkshire, Headingley
7-55 JA Porter, Essex v Somerset, Chelmsford
7-67 JC Archer, Sussex v Kent, Hove
7-80 GC Viljoen, Derbyshire v Sussex, Hove
7-117 DM Bess, Somerset v Hampshire, Taunton

MOST WICKETS IN A MATCH

14-128 SR Harmer, Essex v Warwickshire, Chelmsford
14-172 SR Harmer, Essex v Middlesex, Chelmsford
12-95 JA Porter Essex v Somerset, Chelmsford
11-137 JC Archer, Sussex v Leicestershire, Grace Road
10-72 Mohammad Aamer, Essex v Yorkshire, Scarborough
10-95 LC Norwell, Gloucestershire v Leicestershire, Grace Road
10-99 LC Norwell, Gloucestershire v Leicestershire, Bristol
10-102 BO Coad Yorkshire v Warwickshire, Edgbaston
10-122 J Leach Worcestershire v Northamptonshire, New Road
10-126 BA Hutton Nottinghamshire v Derbyshire, Derby
10-133 P Coughlin Durham v Northamptonshire, Chester-le-Street
10-141 C McKerr Derbyshire v Northamptonshire, Northampton
10-162 DM Bess Somerset v Hampshire, Taunton

Highest team totals

701-7d Kent v Northamptonshire, Beckenham
668 Sussex v Durham, Hove
648-7d Hampshire v Surrey, Oval
619 Leicestershire v Derbyshire, Derby
593 Lancashire v Hampshire, Old Trafford
592 Surrey v Yorkshire, Oval
579-8d Sussex v Worcestershire, Hove
568 Northamptonshire v Kent, Beckenham

Lowest team totals

61 Gloucestershire v Kent, Canterbury
81 Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire, Grace Road

91 Warwickshire v Surrey, Oval
94 Warwickshire v Essex, Chelmsford
98 Derbyshire v Worcestershire, Derby

MOST TEST WICKETS BY AN ENGLISH BOWLER

	M	Wkt	BB	Av
JM Anderson	129	506	7/42	27.39
SCI Broad	109	388	8/15	28.81
IT Botham	102	383	8/34	28.40
RGD Willis	90	325	8/43	25.20
FS Trueman	67	307	8/31	21.57
DL Underwood	86	297	8/51	25.83
GP Swann	109	255	6/65	29.96
JB Statham	70	252	7/39	24.84
MJ Hoggard	67	248	7/61	30.50
AV Bredser	51	236	7/44	24.89
AR Caddick	62	234	7/46	29.91
D Gough	58	229	6/42	28.39
SJ Harmison	62	222	7/12	31.94
A Flintoff	78	219	5/58	33.34
JA Snow	49	202	7/40	26.66
JC Laker	46	193	10/53	21.24
SF Barnes	27	189	9/103	16.43
ARC Fraser	46	177	8/53	27.32
GAR Lock	49	174	7/35	25.58
MS Panesar	50	167	6/37	34.71

MOST TEST RUNS BY AN ENGLISHMAN

	Mt	Rns	HS	Av
AN Cook	147	11629	294	46.33
GA Gooch	118	8900	333	42.58
AJ Stewart	133	8463	190	39.54
DI Gower	117	8231	215	44.25
KP Pietersen	104	8181	227	47.28
GC Flintoff	108	8114	246*	47.72
MA Atherton	115	7728	185*	37.69
IR Bell	118	7727	235	42.69
MC Cowdrey	114	7624	182	44.06
WR Hammond	85	7249	336*	58.45
AJ Strauss	100	7037	177	40.91
L Hutton	79	6971	364	56.67
KF Barrington	62	6806	256	58.67
GP Thorpe	100	6744	200*	44.66
ME Trescothick	76	5825	219	43.79
DCS Compton	78	5807	278	50.06
N Hussain	96	5764	207	37.18
MP Vaughan	82	5719	197	41.44
JB Hobbs	61	5410	211	55.94
JE Root	60	5323	254	53.76

Most Test runs

	Mat	Rns	HS	Av
SR Tendulkar	200	15921	248*	53.78
RT Ponting	168	13378	257	51.85
JH Kallis	166	13289	224	55.37
R Dravid	164	13288	270	52.31
KC Sangakkara	134	12400	319	57.40
BC Lara	131	11953	400*	52.88
S Chanderpaul	164	11867	203*	51.37
D Jayawardene	149	11814	374	49.84
AN Cook	147	11629	294	46.33
AR Border	156	11174	205	50.56
SR Waugh	168	10927	200	51.06
SM Gavaskar	125	10122	236*	51.12
Younis Khan	118	10099	313	52.05
GC Smith	117	9265	277	48.25
GA Gooch	118	8900	333	42.58
Javed Miandad	124	8832	280*	52.57
Inzamam-ul-Haq	120	8830	329	49.60
VVS Laxman	134	8781	281	45.97
MJ Clarke	115	8643	329*	49.10
ML Hayden	103	8625	380	50.73
V Sehwag	104	8586	319	49.34
IVA Richards	121	8540	291	50.23
AJ Stewart	133	8463	190	39.54
HM Amla	107	8281	311*	49.00
DI Gower	117	8231	215	44.25
KP Pietersen	104	8181	227	47.28

Most Test wickets

	Mt	Rns	HS	Av
M Muralitharan	133	800	9/51	22.72
SK Warne	145	708	8/71	25.41
A Kumble	132	619	10/74	29.6

Test cricket's '500' club

James Anderson has joined Test cricket's elite 500 wickets club. Here, the Sports Pink assesses the five others to have reached the milestone.

MUTTHIAH MURALITHARAN

Sri Lanka (800 wickets, 133 Tests, 22.72 average)

The Sri Lankan great boasts a tally that will surely never be conquered, and was long considered near impossible. His controversial action will, unfortunately, always encroach into conversations about his ability to generate prodigious, venomous turn with his off-breaks and doosras but having been cleared to bowl by the International Cricket Council, he did so with a merciless appetite. His record of 67 five-wicket hauls and 22 10-wicket matches is a record by an almost comical margin and, arguably, no retirement in history has left such an irreplaceable gap in a national side.

SHANE WARNE

Australia (708 wkts, 145 Tests, 25.41 avg)

With a surfer's hair-cut and a club cricketer's build, Warne busted many stereotypes with his innate genius for the craft of leg-spin. He resuscitated the art after a long spell of dormancy and bamboozled



Shane Warne

batsmen all over the world with his vast arsenal of deliveries - all hyped, many genuine, some imagined. The former Hampshire skipper made his name by bowling England's Mike Gatting with the 'ball of the century' in 1993 and was still baiting the old enemy 14 years later, signing off in triumph after a 5-0 Ashes whitewash.

ANIL KUMBLE

India (619 wkts, 132 Tests, 29.65 avg)

For many reasons, cricketing and non-cricketing, the cerebral wrist-spinner will be immortalised by his feat of taking all 10 wickets in an innings against India's great rivals Pakistan in 1999. Kumble's brilliance was often sidelined by the exploits of the two names above him on the list but he achieved two things neither Warne nor Muralitharan ever did - a Test century and being named captain of his country, which he achieved age 37.

GLENN MCGRATH

Australia (563 wkts, 124 matches, 21.64 avg)

It was Australian cricket's great fortune that the careers of Warne and McGrath ran in tandem from 1993 to 2007, and no coincidence that they dominated that era so comprehensively.

Continued on facing page

HANTS CRICKET

Getting set for

Simon Walter



THERE is nothing like a forthcoming Ashes tour to atone for the end of an English summer.

But this year's series provide a reminder of how long four years can be in sport.

Fewer than half of England's last Ashes touring squad are likely to be on the plane to Australia for this winter's series.

The likes of Ian Bell, Kevin Pietersen, Jonathan Trott and Michael Carberry are no longer in contention, hence the current state of flux in England's top five.

Other absentees from 2013/14 include former Hampshire star Chris Tremlett, Matt Prior, Boyd Rankin and Monty Panesar.

It is only two years since England won the 2015 series 3-2, but following England's 2-1 series win against the West Indies, thoughts will soon turn to the first Ashes Test at the Gabba, Brisbane on November 23.

This is my 16-man Ashes touring party...

ALASTAIR COOK

England's all-time leading run scorer remains steadfast at the top of the order. Still only 32, no-one comes close to his 11,629 Test runs at 46.33, of which he has made 1,288 runs at 49.53 in 15 Tests Down Under. Most of those (766 runs at 127.6) were made during the 2010/11 series. A good tour for Cook would see him become only the sixth player in history to pass 12,000 Test runs.

MARK STONEMAN

The jury is still out on the Surrey batsman, but after following his 52 against West Indies at Headingley with an unbeaten 40 in the nine-wicket series-clinching win at Lord's, he deserves to begin the series as Cook's opening partner.

At 30, the left-hander has gleaned plenty of county experience. The hard wickets in Australia, particularly Perth's WACA, will be very different to those he has played on for most of his career at Durham.

JOE ROOT

Much will depend on England's captain, who the Aussies will target mercilessly as they have always done against our skippers. There is no doubt Root has the talent to handle the fire and fury of the Baggy Green fast bowlers and he will be determined to improve on his only previous Ashes tour (192 runs at 27.42). Hopefully he will have little trouble transferring his 2013 and 2015 form (799

runs at 47) when he takes on the Aussies in their own back yard.

DAWID MALAN

A classy left-hander in the County Championship, Malan has adapted best to the rigours of Test cricket of those England players who have been given the chance to fill the problem No4 po-

sition. He has averaged 40-plus for Middlesex in the last few years but a career average of 37 does not demand inclusion and goes to show how difficult it is for England to replace Ian Bell.

BEN STOKES

Hit a stunning maiden Test century during the 5-0 whitewash of

2013/14 and returns as one of, if not the, best all-rounders in the world. His 120 against the Aussies in Perth (195 balls, 18 fours, one six) was the highlight of England's last tour and similar heroics will be needed again if another emphatic defeat is to be avoided.

JONNY BAIRSTOW



Mason Crane, main picture, Mark Stoneman (top left), Ben Stokes (middle left), Dawid Malan (left) and England skipper Joe Root (right).

HANTS CRICKET



an Ashes tour



England's wicketkeeper played in the last two Tests of 2013/14 but is sure to be in the XI that starts the 2017/18 series in Brisbane. Averages 46 with the bat, an outstanding record for a Test wicketkeeper, comparable with that of Adam Gilchrist.

It is 15 months since he scored his three Test centuries in the space of six matches but he has

remained a consistent contributor.

MOEEN ALI

Has not played an Ashes Test in Australia before but there is no doubting his class.

Now a world star, the off-spinning all-rounder became the fifth-fastest player to complete the

Test double of 2000 runs and 100 wickets earlier this summer. He got there in his 38th Test, against South Africa at Lord's in July. He was faster to the double milestone than Ian Botham (42). Those to get there in fewer matches include Ashes legends Keith Miller and Tony Greig (both 37).

CHRIS WOAKES

As no other top-order batsman has demanded inclusion, it makes sense for England to include an extra all-rounder.

Woakes was dropped just one match into his comeback during the West Indies series. But if he can recover his zip he will be a useful addition. Averages more with the bat (32.6) than he does with the ball (30.14) in Test cricket, the hallmark of a genuine all-rounder.

Made his debut against Australia at The Oval in 2013 but is yet to play an Ashes match in Australia.

STUART BROAD

It seems more than two years since Broad took 8-15 to help England clinch the urn at Trent Bridge. He has 84 Ashes wickets at 27.69 but his determination will be fuelled by what happened after his 6-81 in the first Test at Brisbane four years ago. Australia were bowled out for 295, but went on to win by 381 runs before winning the next four Tests for good measure.

MASON CRANE

Hampshire's prodigious leg-spin talent is expected to make his Test debut this winter and hopefully it will be before the final Test at Sydney, traditionally the most spin-friendly of Australia's Test grounds.

The 20 year-old is already known about in Australia after impressing so much in grade cricket that he was handed his Sheffield Shield debut for New South Wales, in so doing becoming the state's first overseas player since the mid-1980s. With Adil Rashid now seemingly below Crane in the pecking order, it will be a big surprise if he does not make the squad.

JAMES ANDERSON

Arguably England's greatest ever bowler, Anderson only needs 14 wickets to go past Courtney Walsh and become Test cricket's most prolific seamer after Glenn McGrath. It would be fitting if he goes into the top five of Test wicket-takers in Australia, which he should do if he stays fit.

By his very high standards, Anderson's Ashes record is relatively modest (87 wickets at 35.87) and will be desperate for him to repeat his form of 2010/11 (24 wickets at 26.04). Should he do so he will establish himself in the pantheon of Ashes greats.

JOS BUTTLER

Likely to go as England's second-choice wicketkeeper although Surrey's Ben Foakes has a strong case to make the 16 too.

Anderson's milestones

from facing page

McGrath stands as the most prolific seam bowler in history and achieved greatness not through stunning pace or vicious lateral movement, though he was able to summon enough of both.

Instead he was relentless in finding the right line and length on any given surface and probing it exhaustively. Famous for his refusal to offer cheap runs, he has the lowest average among the top 10 wicket-takers.

COURTNEY WALSH, West Indies (519 wkts, 132 Tests, 24.44 avg)

Discussions on the greatest fast bowler to hail from the Caribbean tend to be long and involve a long list of contenders, including illustrious names such as Hampshire greats Malcolm Marshall and Andy Roberts as well as Joel Garner, Colin Croft, Michael Holding, Ian Bishop and Curtly Ambrose.

But none of those had Walsh's fortitude and staying power, as he clocked up 132 Test caps in 17 years. No specialist paceman has ever played more.

Like McGrath, Walsh was more work-horse than war machine in his devastating partnership with Ambrose but his natural height and bounce never failed to unsettle batsmen.



England's James Anderson

● James Anderson's milestone wickets en route to his 500 club membership.

1. Mark Vermeulen (bowled) v Zimbabwe at Lord's, 2003.
50. MS Dhoni (caught Ian Bell) v India at Lord's, 2007
100. Jacques Kallis (lbw) v South Africa at the Oval, 2008
150. Graeme Smith (caught Matt Prior) v South Africa at Newlands, 2010
200. Peter Siddle (caught Paul Collingwood) v Australia at Perth, 2010
250. Lahiru Thirimanne (caught Graeme Swann) v Sri Lanka at Galle, 2012
300. Peter Fulton (caught Graeme Swann) v New Zealand at Lord's, 2013
350. Angelo Mathews (caught Alastair Cook) v Sri Lanka at Lord's, 2014
384. Dinesh Ramdin (caught Alastair Cook) v West Indies at Antigua, 2015
400. Martin Guptill (caught Ian Bell) v New Zealand at Headingley, 2015
450. Rangana Herath (lbw) v Sri Lanka at Durham, 2016
500. Kraigg Brathwaite (bowled) v West Indies at Lord's, 2017

Continued on page 35

My England Ashes tour squad ...

From page 35

May well be needed for his batting more than his keeping. Averaged 15 while keeping during the 3-2 Ashes win of 2015. He has only played twice since and has not featured at all in England's five day side since October 2015, despite scoring five half-centuries in his first eight Tests.

HASEEM HAMEED

Has made a good case for a Test recall after for returning to form for Lancashire with three half-centuries in his last four County Championship appearances.

The 20 year-old made a very respectable 219 runs at 43.8 during his three Test appearances in India last November before being dropped following bad start to the county season.

But with Mark Stoneman's place not established, he has to go.

TOBY ROLAND-JONES

Has earned his place during a breakthrough summer in which he took 17 wickets at 19.64 in his first four Tests. It has been a memorable two seasons for the



James Vince.

nephew of former Saints star Steve Moran, after is heroics in Middlesex's title winning campaign last year. But this will be the toughest test of his career.

JAMES VINCE

The Hampshire star has been unfortunate not to get an opportunity this year but England can do no worse than take the 26 year-old as a reserve batsman. A Test record of 212 runs at 19.27, made against Pakistan and Sri Lanka, does not reflect his ability. But he will need to improve on a Championship record of 524 runs at 34.9 to give him the best possible chance to do so.

JAMIE PORTER

There's nothing like a left-field Ashes tour inclusion to catapult a young talent into the limelight. Porter's sheer weight of wickets (64 at 17 apiece) in Essex's Championship-winning campaign demands some form of recognition. It will probably come in the form of Lions selection initially with the express pace of Mark Wood likely to get the Durham man the nod for Australia. But Porter is a star on the rise.

LOCAL CRICKET



Paul Hawkins. Pic by Terry Jamieson

Hawk-Eye's Paul still in the runs ...

Paul Hawkins, the innovator of Hawk-Eye's cricket technology, has shown he can still wield the willow to good effect by winning a Southern Premier League divisional batting award for the second consecutive season.

Last year he led St Cross Sy-

mondians' seconds promotion charge by topping the Division 3 charts with 757 runs at an average of 58.23.

The former Buckinghamshire Minor Counties cricketer shone again this summer as the promoted Winchester side established

themselves as the top second team in the Premier League pyramid by finishing third in Division 2 behind champions OTs & Romsey and Hartley Wintney.

Hawkins hit six half-centuries in his 556-run aggregate.

Young Felix leads the SPL Team of the Year

Mike Vimpany



Felix Organ, who made his County Championship debut for Hampshire against Middlesex at Uxbridge this week, has been named as captain of the Southern Premier League's Under-21 Team of the Season.

He is one of three Academy players named alongside promising all-rounder Tom Scriven and teenager Scott Currie, whose elder left-arm pace bowling brother Bradley is also selected.

Will Kerr takes the batsman/wicket-keeping slot after his fine season for promoted Division 2 side Hartley Wintney, while Ben Draper, who had a fine summer with the gloves for South Wilts, is picked as a batsman.

The Under-21 side, selected across all four divisions, is ..

Felix Organ

Scored 498 top flight runs for the Hampshire Academy at 45.27. Hit a maiden SPL century - 125 against New Milton.

Will Wade

An ever present for South Wilts in the top flight, Wade scored 461 runs at 32.92. His highest score was 103 against Lymington.

Tom Scriven

Organ's Academy colleague was also in the runs in 2017 - hitting 405 in 10 innings with a top score of 98.

Harry Came

The St Cross youngster was an ever present in the SPL top flight and scored 579 runs at an impressive 61.59. Top score was 112 not out against South Wilts.

Ben Johns

Scored 452 runs for SPL Division 1 champions Calmore Sports.

Will Kerr



Tom Scriven and, right, Will Wade.

Wicket-keeper for Hartley Wintney in Division 1.

Ben Draper

The South Wilts batsman scored 372 top flight runs at 31.00 with a highest score of 100 against St Cross.

Scott Currie

The Dorset Minor Counties player took 10 wickets for the Hampshire Academy.

Luke Evans

The South Wilts seamer bagged 35 wickets in the top flight. He took four or more wickets on four occasions with a best of 5-20 against New Milton.

Dom Clutterbuck

The spinner was a regular wicket-taker for Bournemouth in Division 1.

Bradley Currie

The Bashley Rydal player took 13 wickets in the SPL top flight, including a 5-30 burst against South Wilts.



LOCAL CRICKET



Tom pips Gosport mate Lee to run award



Gosport Borough pair Lee Harrop (left) and skipper Tom Larnar battled it out neck and neck for the Southern Premier League Division 3 batting prize.

Harrop made 559 runs from 15 knocks,

hitting six half-centuries and averaging 50.82, but Larnar went off with the SPL3 silverware, his 651 runs containing seven scores of fifty or more.

Alton's England PD opener/

wicketkeeper Hugo Hammond made 417 runs, Purbrook's Sean Figgins 414, and Basingstoke & North Hants teenage all-rounder Matt Deadman 400.

Frith so close to double SPL prize

Sparsholt captain Jeremy Frith came within a whisker of pulling off a notable Southern Premier League double this summer.

Pictured in action for his native Guernsey, Frith topped the bowling charts with 39 wickets – he took 6-21 against promoted Hartley Wintney and 5-43 v champions OTs & Romsey – and, going into the final round of matches, was also Division 2's leading run scorer.

But he missed the boat after scoring only nine runs in Sparsholt's last day defeat by Paultons, conceding the batting prize to St Cross Symondians' Paul Hawkins, who finished just three runs ahead with 556, compared with Frith's 553, which contained 109 against South Wilts II.

Leading Division 2 bowling figures: Jeremy Frith (Sparsholt) 39, Rob Pittman (South Wilts II) 37, Tom Pearce (South Wilts II) 28, Ethan Taylor (Totton & Eling) 27, Andrew Denney (Paultons) 26,



Chris Chandler

Nick Doubell (Sparsholt) 26, Peter Lamb (Paultons) 25, Joe Vaughan (OTs & Romsey) 25.

● Bournemouth, Fair Oak and Sarisbury Athletic feature in a three-way shoot-out for the Hampshire Under-19 T20 title at New Milton's Fernhill ground on Sunday (10am).

Favourites St Cross Symondians have been forced to withdraw due to players being away at ei-

ther university or school.

Bournemouth defend their 2016 crown against Fair Oak in the opening match at 10am, and face Sarisbury Athletic in the next round-robin at 12.50pm.

Fair Oak then play Sarisbury Athletic at 3.40pm, with the presentations set down for 6.20pm.

Strict time constraints are being applied on over-rates.

Admission is free with New Milton providing a full bar and buffet service throughout the day.

● Basingstoke & North Hants second team pair Chris Chandler and Chris Oliver have picked up individual awards on the back of the Bountymen's British Gas Southern League Division 3 promotion success.

Chandler's 27-wicket haul earned the skipper a half-share (with Fawley's Adam Freeman) of the SPL3 bowling award, while Oliver's 23 victims behind the stumps secured the divisional wicket-keeping award.



Jeremy Frith

Moors the merrier for Lymington

Lymington all-rounder Kieran Moors has been 'selected' for the Hampshire League's County Division One Team of the Season.

His 25-wicket haul helped Lymington 2nds finish runners up in County 1 and regain the Premier 3 slot they relinquished at the end of 2016.

Hythe & Dibden opener Inam Agha is 'picked' for a top order slot in a side which also includes Fareham & Crofton left-hander Tom Kent and Burridge spin all-rounder Suji Wickramasinghe.

Four of Portsmouth & Southsea's title winning side spearhead the County 1 select team.

County 1 side -
Ben Wadmore, Ryde
Will de Cani, Longparish
Inam Agha, Hythe & Dibden
Jack Davies, Portsmouth & Southsea
Matt Benfield, Portsmouth & Southsea



Kieron Moors

Tom Kent, Fareham & Crofton
Suji Wickramasinghe, Burridge
+ Will Samways, Longparish
Kieran Moors, Lymington
Jon Willey, Portsmouth & Southsea

* Keiran Dunstan, Portsmouth & Southsea.

Jetting off ...

Longparish run gun Will de Cani jets off to Australia on Sunday evening to spend the winter playing for Melbourne side South Yarra.

De Cani's 653 runs this summer contained centuries against champions Portsmouth & Southsea (141) and Bishops Waltham (101 not out), helping the promoted Test Valley village club finish third in County 1.

The 22-year old, who hopes to put his First Class BSc degree in City and Regional Planning from Cardiff University to practical use during his six months in Australia, would probably have won a second consecutive HCL divisional batting award had Parish's match at relegated Sarisbury Athletic not been washed out.

NEW FOREST MARATHON, 2017



NEW FOREST MARATHON, 2017



Runners at the New Forest Marathon.



Faye, Florence, Jason, Kaz and Ollie running for Ed Hughes at the New Forest Marathon.



NEW FOREST WIGGLE CYCLE RIDE, SEPT 16, 2017



Cyclists peddle through Brockenhurst. All pictures by Stuart Martin. More pix online at dailyecho.co.uk



NEW FOREST WIGGLE CYCLE RIDE, SEPT 16, 2017



A postman hurries to get out of the way as cyclists bear down on him.



Cyclists peddle through Brockenhurst. All pictures by Stuart Martin. More pix online at dailyecho.co.uk



Key men in Essex title triumph

Essex have won their first County Championship title since 1992.

Here, the Sports Pink highlights five of the men who made it happen ahead of their visit to The Ageas Bowl next week.

RYAN TEN DOESCHATE

The South Africa-born former Netherlands international is much-travelled but has been a one-club man in England, and a driving force as captain since succeeding James Foster at the start of the promotion season last year. Initially an all-rounder, he bowls little these days but remains a banker with the bat in the middle order.

JAMIE PORTER

The Leytonstone-born seamer has had a wonderful season with 64 championship wickets. Was on the verge of giving up his ambitions as a professional cricketer four years ago before re-committing to the cause. At 24, he has demonstrated his old-fashioned attributes of accuracy and durability can still be a winning combination.

SIMON HARMER

The signing of the season, across all sports perhaps.



Jamie Porter

Harmer's arrival at Essex this year was first notable only because it fitted the topical narrative of a glut of South African Test players forsaking international cricket in order to secure a more predictable future as non-overseas players in England. He trails Porter by just one wicket at the top of the national tables and gave Essex's season massive impetus with 14 in successive Chelmsford victories in June - remarkable mid-summer returns for any finger spinner.

CHRIS SILVERWOOD

Took over from his fellow Yorkshireman Paul Grayson as head coach at the start of last season, and has duly overseen back-to-back titles. The former Test seamer reportedly has a laid-back but hard-working and inclusive style. Whatever his specific methods, it is no surprise to hear the England management may be increasingly interested in Silverwood's CV in their search for a new bowling coach.

ALASTAIR COOK

The former England captain was typically prolific to get his county up and running as he warmed up for the Test summer ahead in the early championship rounds of the season. His one-off mid-season return brought another 193 runs against the pink ball, in an opening stand of 373 with Nick Browne, and he tops Essex's averages at 66.70 per innings.



Action from Peter Symonds' win against Richard Taunton (white). Jo Sutherland, right, celebrates scoring Symonds' second goal.

Champs Symonds off to a winning start

Mike Vimpany



Peter Symonds, chasing a third successive Hampshire Colleges League title, made a good start with a 4-3 victory over Richard Taunton's at Hill Lane.

But coach Rob Kitley has some defensive frailties to resolve before his much-changed side host Itchen at Bereweek Avenue on Wednesday.

For the past two seasons, PSC have barnstormed their way to success on the back of midfield powerhouse Harry Bayles, Max Kirwan's goals and numerous contributions from elsewhere.

But a host of the key components of the PSC side which has dominated recent college soccer have moved on, leaving key positions to be filled.

As always, Symonds are dangerous going forward and, rather than having a 2-0 interval lead through Ben Sunley and Jo Sutherland, ought to have been out of sight by the break.

But when RTC clawed one back through the enigmatic Efu Kazadi, the visitors wobbled.

The problem was Taunton's couldn't keep their own back door shut and when rookie keeper Tom Wood didn't get the defensive 'wall' set up as he might have liked, the influential Ant Croucher drove a low free-kick into the unguarded bottom corner and restored PSC's two-goal cushion.

Ben Huckin, probably Taunton's best player, had the hosts back in it at 3-2 - his goal setting up a frenetic finale.

Sutherland had what looked a perfectly good fourth PSC goal ruled out for offside, then Josh Corner



Ben Sunley (right) celebrates after scoring Peter Symonds' first goal. Pictures by Stuart Martin.

smashed a screamer against the woodwork.

Amid the mayhem, Sunley got his second for Symonds' but, as the referee glanced at his watch, the defending champions were undone by a massive throw to the far post by Elliott Perkis and Arshia Sheibat-zadeh bundled it home.

Itchen's matches with Peter Symonds are invariably a good watch - and James Taylor's charges warmed up with a 4-1 win over promoted Poole Grammar.

PGS took the lead from a Jaco

Castillo-Macpherson penalty and repelled Itchen until just before half-time when the Bitterne side scored twice in quick succession.

Ethan Taylor converted the game's second penalty and then skilfully set up Jack Barnes to make it 2-1 at the break.

In the second half Itchen were in total control with Taylor scoring an excellent team goal for the third.

The Poole keeper made a string of fine saves before James Smith competed the scoring.

Farnborough and Barton Peveril

shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw - Matt Rickman, impressive in midfield, cancelling out Jake Wilson's strike for Boro'.

Championship results: Basingstoke 3 Portsmouth 2, Bournemouth 2, Bournemouth 0, Farnborough 2 Barton Peveril 6 (Josh Carey 5) Peter Symonds 3, Havant/Southdowns 4.

Wednesday's matches - Premier Division: Andover v Poole Grammar, Barton Peveril v Richard Taunton's, Peter Symonds v Itchen.

Championship: Barton Peveril v Bournemouth, Basingstoke v Peter Symonds, Bournemouth v Portsmouth, Havant/Southdowns v Farnborough.

PINK

Nomansland edge seven-goal Sunday thriller

RS Nomansland Reserves won 4-3 at Athletic Romsey in Division 4 of the City of Southampton Sunday League.

Ben Dawkins, Brett Hall, John Longman and Steve Angel netted, with Ollie Burroughs (2) and Wayne Webster replying.

Matt Lay, Jack Stuttard and Mark Lavelle scored as AFC Forestside won 3-2 at Forest Home. Keith Hartman and Freddie Atterbury replied.

Hedge End City came from behind at half-time to win 3-1 at Tokyo with Ryan Dennis (2) and Jacob Ainslie netting. Mark Christopher had put the hosts ahead.

James Elmore's second half leveller gave Sholing Monks a 1-1 draw at AFC Stoneham, Jason Calcutt having put the hosts ahead.

Hedge End Club led the scoring in Division

5 with an 8-1 hammering off Whiteheart United. On target were Callum Parker (3), Jake Bessant (2), Paul Huck and Lee Fuller.

Dingle Rovers caned Chandler's Ford Athletic 6-1 with goals from George Shotton (2), Ben Gurman (2), Lewis Mintrim and Brad Mackin.

A.F.C. Itchen defeated Netley Spitfire 4-3 with James Brewer, Roland Bryan, Reuben Bryan and an own goal on target. Connor Reed, Logan Warrilow-Lintott and James Wheeler.

Mike Phillips was Otter's hat-trick hero in a 5-1 romp at Linden Tree in Division 6.

Scott Humphries and Ricky Mauger also scored, while Joe Hampton fired a second half consolation.

Pawel Burdzy (2), Robert Bubula, Joe Cook and Mick Manning netted as Hamwic Rovers won 5-2 at Nemesis. Ben Hatcher (penalty) and Adrian Taylor replied.

Riverside Rangers beat Park Gate Rangers 2-1 with goals from Pete Kerr and Josh Osman, Matt Veale replying.

Joe Pilgrim, Matt Storer and Hashim Alyas netted as Unity 101 beat Southern Sports 3-0.

A.F.C. Southbridge defeated A.F.C. Itchen Reserves 4-3 in Division 7, Nick England, Conor Dunford and Mike Bedford replying.

Jamie Brown and Alex Fleet were on target as AFC Mayflower won 2-1 at Michelmersh & Timsbury. Adam Redman replied.

Southern Sports Reserves defeated Phoenix 7-1 with goals from Sam Driscoll (3), Ryan Williams (2), Rhys Kerry and Jack Draper. Jared Parker replied.

Champions held at home by Fawley

DEFENDING champions Chamberlayne Athletic were held 2-2 by newly promoted Fawley RBL in the second round of New Forest Training Services Ltd City of Southampton Sunday League matches.

Fawley led 2-1 at the interval through Kieran Roach and Matt Swartz-Mabey, but Andy Powell levelled with his second goal of the contest.

George Slimm also struck a second half equaliser as Durdley drew 1-1 at Boyatt Wood, Sam Drummond having given the hosts a half-time lead.

AFC Soton trailed 1-0 at the break to a Jamie Cattle strike for Clock Inn, but hit back to win 2-1 through Aiden Collins and Tyler Young.

Dan Hansford's second half strike gave Hunters Inn a Division 1 victory over AFC Riverside.

Wayne O'Dell's brace helped Bitterne Ducks draw 3-3 with Bridge Manor. Toby Withey also netted with David Gentry, Matthew Camfield and Shah Bani-Sadr replying.

Dave Williams put King George into a half-time lead against Lordshill, who levelled through Callum Gill.

Paul Mail, Brad Copperthwaite (2), Paul Mail and Frazer McLean scored as Chartwell Green beat Chamberlayne Athletic Reserves 4-1 in Division 2. Ryan Stephenson replied.

Joe McCann and Steven Bell struck as AFC Spitfire beat Landguard Rovers 2-1, Iyaz Cawsey replying.

Matt White and Mark Barton



Hampshire Colleges action between Richard Taunton (White) and Peter Symonds. Report on facing page.

were on target as Portswood United defeated Marchwood Rovers 2-0.

Aiden Reidy led the spree as Mayfield Rovers hammered Southampton Warriors 12-1 in Division 3.

He netted four times with Dan Szask (2), Sam Martin (2), Oliver

Durman, Josh Gore, Josh Knight and Dale Perry joining in the fun.

Sam Oliver and Mitch Down both struck twice as OTs & Romsey defeated London Airways 5-3. Joe Boggild (2) and Callum Watson replied.

Mottisfont enjoyed a 6-4 win at Test Valley Spartans with Miles

McLeod (2), Matt Bosenquet (2), Sam Piper and Harry Dance on target. James Hill (3) and Curtis White replied.

Malcy Davie, Sean Haines and Luca Cordeddu netted as Testlands Reserves drew 3-3 at home to Portside

5 things you can't miss in the racing week ...

SCOTTISH GOLD

The William Hill Ayr Gold Cup is one of the most anticipated sprint handicaps of the season and was won last year in great style by subsequent Group One winner Brando. Shanghai Glory is the current ante-post favourite, while Mattmu is sure to attract further support for the shrewdest of operators in Tim Easterby. Half an eye should also be kept on Kevin Ryan's Tommy Taylor if he lines up in last year's winning colours.

NEWBURY ACES

The Dubai Duty Free Mill Reef Stakes takes centre stage at Newbury on Saturday and has an illustrious roll of honour to its name. The last two runnings went the way of Ribchester and Harry Angel respectively and their subsequent exploits are plain for all to see. Invincible Army and Enjaazat are two names already pencilled in for the six-furlong Group Two.

GERMANY CALLING

Sunday's Grosser Preis Von Europa is a race that has eluded British-based trainers since Campanologist's victory in 2011, but prior to that eight of the previous 14 runnings came home to British shores. John Dunlop and Saeed bin Suroor have both claimed the prize on three occasions and with the former now retired, the onus is on Bin Suroor to continue the trend.

AIDAN O'BRIEN

Aidan O'Brien has won this Group Two contest a record 16 times, including the last six renewals. Subsequent Irish Derby hero Capri led home an O'Brien 1-2-3 in last year's race, and it would be no surprise to see 'the lads' unleash another star this time, with Gustav Klimt, Nelson and The Pentagon amongst the early entries. Usually run at the Curragh, this year's renewal is due to be staged at Naas on Sunday while the headquarters of Irish racing undergoes its 65million euro redevelopment.

SEASIDE FUN

Yarmouth plays host to some midweek madness as the track stages its most prestigious three-day meeting of the year, the Eastern Festival. Running from Tuesday to Thursday, the likes of Dubai Millennium, Ouija Board and Raven's Pass all registered their first career successes at the Norfolk venue so particular attention should be paid to the juvenile contests.

FIXTURES (FLAT in capitals)

Monday: BRIGHTON, CARLISLE, Worcester

Tuesday: CHEPSTOW, NEWCASTLE, REDCAR, YARMOUTH

Wednesday: BEVERLEY, Kelso, SANDOWN, YARMOUTH

Thursday: AYR, CHELMSFORD (evening), PONTEFRAC, YARMOUTH

Friday: AYR, NEWBURY, NEWCASTLE (evening), Newton Abbot

Saturday: AYR (ITV4), CATTERICK, NEWBURY (ITV4), NEWMARKET, WOLVERHAMPTON (evening)

Sunday: Plumpton, Uttoxeter.

PINK

SAINTS		CHERRIES		POMPEY		EASTLEIGH		POOLE	
PREMIER LEAGUE		PREMIER LEAGUE		LEAGUE 1		NATIONAL LEAGUE		NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH	
AUGUST		AUGUST		AUGUST		AUGUST		AUGUST	
12 Swansea (H)	D 0-0	12 West Brom (A)	L 0-1	5 Rochdale (H)	W 2-0	5 Bromley (A)	D 0-0	5 Weston SM (A)	W 2-1
19 West Ham (H)	W 3-2	19 Watford (H)	L 0-2	12 Oxford United(A)	L 0-3	8 Sutton United (H)	W 1-0	8 Bognor Regis (H)	D 2-2
26 Huddersfield (A)	D 0-0	26 Manchester City(H)	L 1-2	19 Walsall (H)	D 1-1	12 Dagenham (H)	D 2-2	12 East Thurrock (H)	L 2-3
SEPTEMBER		SEPTEMBER		26 Wigan (A)	D 1-1	15 Woking (A)	L 1-2	15 Chippenham (A)	W 1-0
9 Watford (H)	L 0-2	9 Arsenal (A)	L 0-3	SEPTEMBER		19 Tranmere (H)	W 2-0	19 St Albans City(H)	L 0-1
16 Crystal Palace (A)	(A)	15 Brighton (H)	(H)	3 Rotherham (H)	L 0-1	26 Leyton Orient(A)	D 1-1	26 Bath City (A)	L 0-1
23 Manchester United (H)	(H)	23 Everton (A)	(A)	9 AFC Wimbledon (A)	D 1-1	28 Aldershot (H)	D 0-0	28 Hungerford (H)	L 1-2
30 Stoke (A)	(A)	30 Leicester (H)	(H)	12 Northampton (A)	L 1-3	SEPTEMBER		SEPTEMBER	
OCTOBER		OCTOBER		16 Fleetwood (H)	(H)	2 Ebbsfleet (A)	D 2-2	2 Whitehawk (A)	D 2-2
15 Newcastle (H)	(H)	14 Tottenham (A)	(A)	23 Scunthorpe (A)	(A)	9 Guiseley (A)	D 0-0	5 Hemel Hempstead(H)	L 2-4
21 West Brom (H)	(H)	21 Stoke (A)	(A)	26 Bristol Rovers (H)	(H)	12 Maidstone (H)	L 0-1	9 Welling United (A)	L 0-2
29 Brighton (A)	(A)	28 Chelsea (H)	(H)	30 Oldham (H)	(H)	16 AFC Fylde (H)	(H)	11 Wealdstone (A)	L 1-4
NOVEMBER		NOVEMBER		OCTOBER		21 Hartlepool (A)	(A)	23 Chelmsford City (H)	(H)
4 Burnley (H)	(H)	4 Newcastle (A)	(A)	8 Gillingham (A)	(A)	30 Chester (H)	(H)	OCTOBER	
18 Liverpool (A)	(A)	18 Huddersfield (H)	(H)	14 MK Dons (H)	(H)	OCTOBER		7 Oxford City (A)	(A)
26 Everton (H)	(H)	25 Swansea (A)	(A)	17 Doncaster (A)	(A)	3 Boreham Wood (A)	(A)	14 Concord Rangers (H)	(H)
29 Manchester City (A)	(A)	29 Burnley (H)	(H)	21 Blackburn (A)	(A)	7 Wrexham (A)	(A)	21 Havant & W (A)	(A)
DECEMBER		DECEMBER		28 Bradford City (H)	(H)	21 Gateshead (H)	(H)	28 Gloucester City (H)	(H)
2 Bournemouth (A)	(A)	2 Southampton (H)	(H)	NOVEMBER		24 Solihull Moors (H)	(H)	NOVEMBER	
10 Arsenal (H)	(H)	9 Crystal Palace (A)	(A)	11 Blackpool (A)	(A)	28 Macclesfield (A)	(A)	4 Eastbourne Borough (A)	(A)
13 Leicester (H)	(H)	12 Manchester United (A)	(A)	18 Southend (H)	(H)	NOVEMBER		11 Braintree (H)	(H)
16 Chelsea (A)	(A)	16 Liverpool (H)	(H)	21 Peterborough (A)	(A)	11 Dover (A)	(A)	18 Hampton & RB (A)	(A)
23 Huddersfield (H)	(H)	23 Manchester City (A)	(A)	25 Plymouth (H)	(H)	18 Barrow (H)	(H)	DECEMBER	
26 Tottenham (A)	(A)	26 West Ham (H)	(H)	DECEMBER		21 Maidenhead (H)	(H)	2 Dartford (H)	(H)
30 Manchester United (A)	(A)	30 Everton (H)	(H)	9 Charlton (A)	(A)	25 Halifax Town (A)	(A)	9 Weston Super-Mare (H)	(H)
JANUARY		JANUARY		16 Bury (H)	(H)	DECEMBER		23 Bognor Regis Town (A)	(A)
1 Crystal Palace (H)	(H)	1 Brighton (A)	(A)	23 Shrewsbury (A)	(A)	2 Sutton United (A)	(A)	26 Truro City (H)	(H)
13 Watford (A)	(A)	13 Arsenal (H)	(H)	26 AFC Wimbledon (H)	(H)	9 Bromley (H)	(H)	JANUARY	
20 Tottenham (H)	(H)	20 West Ham (A)	(A)	30 Northampton (H)	(H)	23 Dagenham (A)	(A)	1 Truro City (A)	(A)
31 Brighton (H)	(H)	31 Chelsea (A)	(A)	JANUARY		26 Torquay (H)	(H)	6 Chippenham (H)	(H)
FEBRUARY		FEBRUARY		1 Bristol Rovers (A)	(A)	30 Woking (H)	(H)	13 East Thurrock (A)	(A)
3 West Brom (A)	(A)	3 Stoke (H)	(H)	6 Fleetwood (A)	(A)	JANUARY		20 Welling United (H)	(H)
10 Liverpool (H)	(H)	10 Huddersfield (A)	(A)	13 Scunthorpe (H)	(H)	1 Torquay (A)	(A)	27 Hemel Hempstead (A)	(A)
24 Burnley (A)	(A)	24 Newcastle (H)	(H)	20 Rotherham (A)	(A)	6 Guiseley (H)	(H)	FEBRUARY	
MARCH		MARCH		27 Shrewsbury (H)	(H)	20 Maidstone (A)	(A)	3 Gloucester City (A)	(A)
3 Stoke (H)	(H)	3 Leicester (A)	(A)	FEBRUARY		27 Hartlepool (H)	(H)	10 Havant & W (H)	(H)
10 Newcastle (A)	(A)	10 Tottenham (H)	(H)	3 Doncaster (H)	(H)	FEBRUARY		17 Eastbourne Borough (H)	(H)
17 Swansea (A)	(A)	17 West Brom (H)	(H)	10 MK Dons (A)	(A)	3 AFC Fylde (A)	(A)	24 Braintree (A)	(A)
31 West Ham (A)	(A)	31 Watford (A)	(A)	13 Blackburn (H)	(H)	10 Boreham Wood (H)	(H)	MARCH	
APRIL		APRIL		17 Southend (A)	(A)	17 Chester (A)	(A)	3 Hampton & RB (H)	(H)
7 Arsenal (A)	(A)	7 Crystal Palace (H)	(H)	24 Blackpool (H)	(H)	20 Maidenhead (A)	(A)	10 Dartford (A)	(A)
14 Chelsea (H)	(H)	14 Liverpool (A)	(A)	MARCH		24 Halifax Town (H)	(H)	17 Bath City (H)	(H)
21 Leicester (A)	(A)	21 Manchester United (H)	(H)	3 Bradford City (A)	(A)	MARCH		24 St Albans City (A)	(A)
28 Bournemouth (H)	(H)	28 Southampton (A)	(A)	10 Gillingham (H)	(H)	3 Barrow (A)	(A)	30 Whitehawk (H)	(H)
MAY		MAY		17 Oldham (A)	(A)	10 Dover Athletic (H)	(H)	APRIL	
5 Everton (A)	(A)	5 Swansea (H)	(H)	24 Oxford United (H)	(H)	17 Leyton Orient (H)	(H)	2 Hungerford (A)	(A)
13 Manchester City (H)	(H)	13 Burnley (A)	(A)	31 Walsall (A)	(A)	24 Tranmere (A)	(A)	7 Chelmsford City (A)	(A)
				APRIL		30 Ebbsfleet (H)	(H)	14 Wealdstone (H)	(H)
				2 Wigan (H)	(H)	APRIL		21 Concord Rangers (A)	(A)
				7 Rochdale (A)	(A)	2 Aldershot (A)	(A)	28 Oxford City (H)	(H)
				14 Plymouth (A)	(A)	7 Wrexham (H)	(H)		
				21 Charlton (H)	(H)	14 Gateshead (A)	(A)		
				28 Bury (A)	(A)	21 Macclesfield (H)	(H)		
				MAY		28 Solihull Moors (A)	(A)		
				5 Peterborough (H)	(H)				



GOSPORT

SOUTHERN PREMIER

AUGUST

12 King's Lynn Town(A)	L 0-2
15 Slough Town (H)	L 1-5
19 Royston Town(H)	L 2-3
26 Tiverton Town(A)	L 0-2
28 Basingstoke Town(H)	L 0-8

SEPTEMBER

9 Biggleswade Town (A)	L 0-2
12 Farnborough (H)	L 2-4
23 Stratford Town	(A)
26 Kings Langley	(A)
30 Hitchin Town	(H)

OCTOBER

7 Bishop's Stortford	(H)
9 Dorchester Town	(A)
14 Merthyr Town	(A)
17 Banbury United	(H)
21 King's Lynn Town	(H)
24 Slough Town	(A)

NOVEMBER

4 St Neots Town	(H)
11 Frome Town	(A)
15 Farnborough	(A)
18 Dunstable Town	(H)
25 Kettering Town	(A)
28 Kings Langley	(H)

DECEMBER

2 Hereford	(H)
9 Redditch United	(A)
16 Chesham United	(H)
23 St Ives Town	(A)
26 Basingstoke Town	(A)

JANUARY

1 Weymouth	(H)
6 Royston Town	(A)
13 Tiverton Town	(H)
20 Bishop's Stortford	(A)
27 Dorchester Town	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 Banbury United	(A)
10 Merthyr Town	(H)
17 Hitchin Town	(A)
24 Statford Town	(H)

MARCH

3 Dunstable	(A)
10 Kettering Town	(H)
17 Redditch United	(H)
24 Hereford	(A)
31 Biggleswade Town	(H)

APRIL

2 Weymouth	(A)
7 St Ives Town	(H)
14 Chesham United	(A)
21 Frome Town	(H)
28 St Neots Town	(A)

AFC TOTTON

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Barnstaple Town(H)	W 3-1
15 Bishops Cleeve(A)	W 3-1
26 Slimbridge (H)	L 1-2
28 Salisbury (A)	L 0-2

SEPTEMBER

9 Yate Town (H)	W 5-0
16 Taunton Town	(A)
23 Larkhall	(A)
26 North Leigh	(H)
30 Paulton Rovers	(H)

OCTOBER

14 Cinderford	(A)
21 Bideford	(H)
24 Swindon Supermarine	(A)

NOVEMBER

4 Kidlington	(A)
11 Mangotsfield	(H)
14 Didcot Town	(H)
18 Shortwood	(A)
25 Evesham United	(H)
28 Wimborne Town	(A)

DECEMBER

2 Cirencester Town	(H)
9 Bristol Manor Farm	(A)
16 Bishops Cleeve	(H)
23 Barnstaple Town	(A)
26 Salisbury	(H)

JANUARY

1 Winchester City	(A)
6 Taunton Town	(H)
13 Slimbridge	(A)
20 Mangotsfield	(A)
27 Kidlington	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 Larkhall Athletic	(H)
10 North Leigh	(A)
17 Cinderford Town	(H)
24 Paulton Rovers	(A)

MARCH

3 Swindon Supermarine	(H)
10 Bideford	(A)
17 Bristol Manor Farm	(H)
24 Cirencester Town	(A)
31 Yate Town	(A)

APRIL

2 Winchester City	(H)
7 Shortwood United	(H)
14 Didcot Town	(A)
21 Wimborne Town	(H)
28 Evesham United	(A)

WINCHESTER

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Shortwood (A)	W 4-2
15 Kidlington (H)	L 0-1
26 Larkhall (A)	W 2-1
28 Wimborne (H)	W 1-0

SEPTEMBER

9 Cirencester Town (A)	L 0-1
16 Paulton (H)	pp
23 Mangotsfield United	(H)
26 Didcot Town	(A)
30 Barnstaple Town	(A)

OCTOBER

14 Bristol Manor Farm	(H)
21 Taunton Town	(A)
24 Salisbury	(H)

NOVEMBER

4 Cinderford Town	(A)
14 Swindon Supermarine	(H)
18 Yate Town	(A)
28 North Leigh	(A)

DECEMBER

2 Evesham United	(H)
9 Slimbridge	(A)
16 Kidlington	(A)
23 Shortwood United	(H)
26 Wimborne Town	(A)

JANUARY

1 AFC Totton	(H)
6 Paulton Rovers	(A)
13 Larkhall Athletic	(H)
20 Bishops Cleeve	(A)
27 Cinderford Town	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 Mangotsfield United	(A)
10 Didcot Town	(H)
17 Bristol Manor Farm	(A)
24 Barnstaple Town	(H)

MARCH

3 Salisbury	(A)
10 Taunton Town	(H)
17 Slimbridge	(H)
24 Evesham United	(A)
31 Cirencester Town	(H)

APRIL

2 AFC Totton	(A)
7 Yate Town	(H)
14 Swindon Supermarine	(A)
21 North Leigh	(H)
28 Bideford	(A)

SALISBURY

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Mangotsfield (A)	W 5-0
15 Paulton Rovers(H)	D 2-2
26 North Leigh (A)	L 1-2
28 AFC Totton (H)	W 2-0

SEPTEMBER

9 Shortwood (A)	W 8-0
23 Yate Town	(A)
26 Swindon Supermarine	(H)
30 Bishops Cleeve	(H)

OCTOBER

14 Slimbridge	(A)
21 Evesham United	(H)
24 Winchester City	(A)

NOVEMBER

4 Barnstaple Town	(A)
11 Larkhall Athletic	(H)
14 Kidlington	(H)
18 Cinderford Town	(A)
25 Bristol Manor Farm	(H)
28 Didcot Town	(A)

DECEMBER

2 Bideford	(H)
9 Taunton Town	(A)
16 Paulton Rovers	(A)
23 Mangotsfield United	(H)
26 AFC Totton	(A)

JANUARY

1 Wimborne Town	(H)
6 Cirencester Town	(A)
13 North Leigh	(H)
20 Larkhall Athletic	(A)
27 Barnstaple Town	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 Yate Town	(H)
10 Swindon Supermarine	(A)
17 Slimbridge	(H)
24 Bishops Cleeve	(A)

MARCH

3 Winchester City	(H)
10 Evesham United	(A)
17 Taunton Town	(H)
24 Bideford	(A)
31 Shortwood United	(H)

APRIL

2 Wimborne Town	(A)
7 Cinderford Town	(H)
14 Kidlington	(A)
21 Didcot Town	(H)
28 Bristol Manor Farm	(A)

WIMBORNE

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Bishops Cleeve(H)	W 3-1
15 Didcot Town (A)	L 2-4
26 Yate Town (H)	W 4-2
28 Winchester City (A)	L 0-1

SEPTEMBER

2 Larkhall Athletic (H)	L 1-3
9 Bristol Manor Farm(H)	L 1-3
17 Evesham United	(A)
30 Wimborne Town	(H)

OCTOBER

14 North Leigh	(A)
21 Swindon Supermarine	(H)
24 Paulton Rovers	(A)

NOVEMBER

4 Shortwood United	(H)
11 Cirencester Town	(A)
14 Taunton Town	(A)
18 Mangotsfield United	(H)
25 Slimbridge	(A)
28 AFC Totton	(H)

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7 Mangotsfield	(A)
14 Taunton Town	(H)
21 AFC Totton	(A)
28 Slimbridge	(H)

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It really made what was a fairly daunting task at the start, a trouble-free and straightforward process. Mr and Mrs G. Lyndhurst

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NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Vanarama National Lge Nth												
		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	P
Harrrogate	11	3	0	1	13	4	5	1	0	20	8	20
Salford City	11	5	0	1	12	4	3	2	0	7	3	26
Brackley	11	4	1	0	7	7	1	3	3	1	10	5
Chorley	11	2	0	3	11	9	2	0	3	1	13	7
Tamworth	11	5	0	1	14	6	1	2	2	4	8	20
Spennymoor	11	2	2	1	8	6	3	1	2	14	8	16
York	11	2	2	2	7	7	3	1	1	12	5	18
Bradford Park Ave	11	3	0	3	11	9	2	0	3	1	13	7
Alfreton Town	11	4	1	1	12	3	1	1	3	8	13	17
Southport	11	2	2	2	11	11	3	0	2	5	9	16
Darlington	11	2	2	1	12	6	1	2	2	4	7	10
Grimsby	11	3	0	3	11	9	2	0	3	1	13	7
AFC Telford	11	1	0	5	8	19	4	0	1	7	1	7
Stokeport City	11	2	0	2	12	2	1	0	5	5	7	13
Kidderminster	11	2	1	1	5	2	0	2	0	8	9	14
Corus Ash	11	3	2	0	8	5	0	2	3	4	14	17
Burton	11	3	1	1	8	6	0	1	5	6	16	10
Nuneaton	11	2	1	2	7	5	0	2	4	5	18	9
Gainsboro	11	1	0	4	9	14	2	2	2	7	11	6
Leamington	11	0	0	5	12	2	2	2	2	5	11	6
FC Utd Man	11	0	4	4	7	11	1	1	4	6	12	7
N Ferry	11	0	2	4	1	16	1	0	4	2	9	9

[illegible]

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE
 Division One West
 Brockworth 10 Wotton Bassett 2
 Fawley AFC 0 East Cowes Vics 0
 Laversstock & Ford 4 Colden Common 2
 New Milton Town 1 Team Solent 1
 Kingswood 1 Downton 2
 Romsey Town 2 Christchurch 5
 Division One East
 Baffins Milton Rovers 1 Sholing 4
 Fareham Town 2 AFC Stoneham 1
 Titchfield 6 Bosham 1
 SOUTHEAST DIVISION SENIOR
 AFC Stoneham 3 Hamble Club Res 1
 BTC Southampton 4 Athletic Romsey 1
 Bush Hill 4 Compton 0
 Comrades 2 Brighthelm 1
 Hedge End 1 AFC Southampton 1
 Locks Heath 0 Fawley AFC 2
 Nursing 4 Chamberlayne AFC 1
 Upham 1 Infinity 7
 DREW'S WITH GROUP SENIORS
 Team 1: Comrades Res 0 Alderbury 3

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